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ABSTRACT

The eight articles in this theme issue of CEDEFOP's twice-yearly multi-lingual bulletin focus on continuing education to maintain and upgrade the workforce. "Force--The Community's Action Programme for the Continuing Training in the 1990s" describes the objectives of this new program to improve the skill levels of the European Community's work force. "Continuing Training: The Role of the Social Partners" (Francois Martou) focuses on the importance of the partners in training development. "Roles for Training: The Reshaping of Work, Mobility, and Earnings?" (Philippe Mehaut, Marie Claire Villeval) describes links currently being constructed between the technological and organizational changes affecting the workplace, new methods of personnel management, and the role of retraining in the process. "Views on the Development of Continuing Vocational Education and Training in Great Britain" (Ken Nixon) shows that insufficient priority has been given to the training needs of mature employees. "Continuing Vocational Training in the Netherlands: Developments and Debates" (Geert Kraayvanger, Ben van Onna) discusses elements of the intellectual and political debate surrounding this branch of adult education. "Vocational Training Redefines Its Limits" (Jean-Francois Germe) takes stock of radical changes in vocational education, considering some present-day challenges and possible patterns of change. "The Analysis of Cost and Financing Structures in Continuing Training" (Uwe Grunewald, Edgar Sauter) presents approaches to the description and analysis of continuing training. "Continuing Training in an Open Learning Centre--An Example that Could Be Transferred to Another Culture?" (Pol Debaty) describes Forespace, a Belgian prototype center for self-directed training. (YLB)

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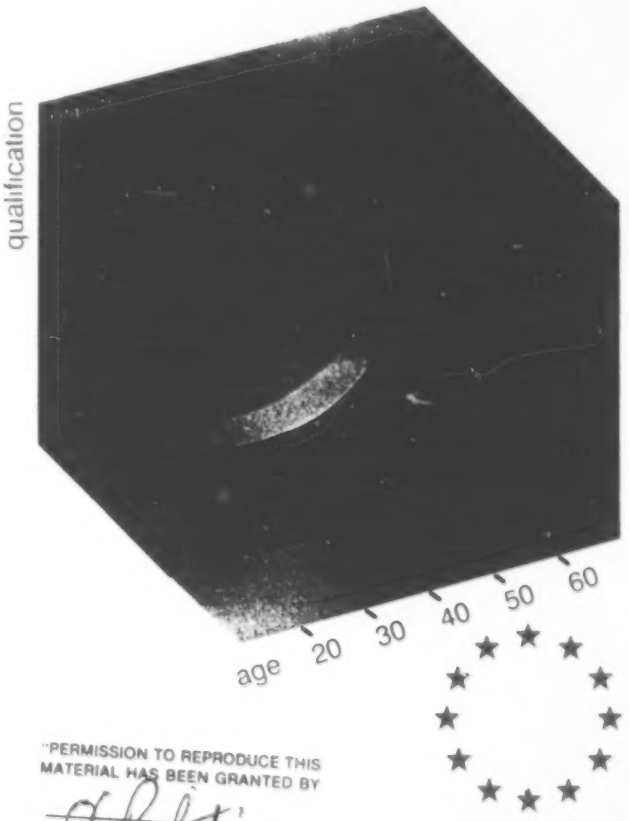

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Dear Readers,

In each individual country the concept of continuing training covers various fields. Within each country, official documents use different terms to denote similar things — hardly surprising, since, in practice, the concept of continuing training is new.

In recent years, there has been a veritable explosion of continuing training in every country in response to a range of social, cultural and economic needs. Since this is a field of activity in which there is as yet little in the way of tradition, the Community can still play a harmonizing role: if continuing training is seen as the logical follow-up to basic training schemes, that training will have considerable influence on the way in which the processes of socialization are organized and work is structured. Research conducted by CEDEFOP has revealed that only a small proportion of training is structured and administered by law and regulations. There is a good deal of political debate in every country on making continuing training more accessible to all. In other words, the concern for 'equal opportunities for all' in compulsory education that dominated the political scene at the beginning of the century has now resurfaced as regards training.

The purpose of our Bulletin is to set out a number of ideas reflecting present-day realities. Taking CEDEFOP's work as our starting point, we focus on the important role played by the social partners in the development of continuing training. We have research to prove that the introduction of continuing training can be harmonious provided that it has been preceded by a dialogue on its structure, allocation and content.

Employers undeniably have a role to play with respect to continuing training. We must ask ourselves whether or not the situation as we know it is reversible. When discussing the role and place of continuing training — a logical extension of education and initial training — we must speculate on the extent to which the job skills of the working population are purely a matter of financial considerations specific to the running of business or industry, or whether they constitute a broader issue of concern to society as a whole, affecting both life today and the future of individual countries and even the Community.

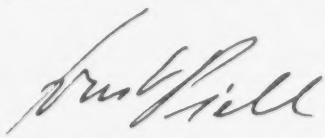
The answer to this question will have major implications, both for the type of training provided and for the manner in which it is distributed and funded. This is the key question at the heart of a concept of continuing training geared towards the short term (satisfying employers' immediate requirements), one which is normally narrowly based, or a concept of continuing training geared towards the medium and long term with a wider and transferable basis. Moreover, questions arise as to the 'ownership' of the job skill and its funding: who should bear the cost of a training programme that is not necessarily confined to the specific needs of one given firm, where the individual — in the employer's view — is the main beneficiary, since the training may help him to find a better job elsewhere? But there is also the question of knowing who should provide the different types of training.

Ultimately, it is the reply to this question which will have significant implications for the way training is allocated: are the people entitled to continuing training solely those designated by the employer (normally the most highly skilled), or should there be a move towards a redistribution of training so that the lower skilled can catch up with others in the competition for market opportunities? And how then would responsibilities be shared out between the employers, authorities and individuals?

Alongside the problems relating to the place and structure of continuing training, there has also been a development in training instruments, whether in the form of new teaching methods or a change in trainers' status. The introduction of new technology to the training process opens up new prospects, which in turn call for a new approach to and analysis of training requirements, as well as the translation of those requirements into training programmes.

In recent years, individuals have shown growing interest in acquiring new skills. To meet the demand in this field, a whole range of new institutions, new programmes and new training methods has thus come into existence in every country. A veritable market has developed, offering training to individuals and companies. Our figures show that the turnover on this market is growing, and yet it is also a fact that hardly any country has regulations to protect the training consumer. Should we do no more than point out this deficiency? Does it not indicate a role for the Community?

The issue of consumer protection is just one of many that emerge when one looks at the field of continuing training. This example has been mentioned simply to show the wide range of questions being addressed by CEDEFOP. In gathering material for the answers, it is our view that a better understanding of the realities will help to ensure that the right questions are asked and the correct answers found. This is the aim of our Bulletin.



Ernst Piehl
Director

Force — The Community's action programme for continuing training in the 1990s

Force, the European Commission's new action programme aimed at helping to improve the skill levels of Europe's 125 000 000 workforce, will begin in January 1991, and by the end of the year it will be fully operational.

'Force is required to give a lead in making all European employers and workers conscious of the vital need to achieve world class training standards,' says Mr Hywel Ceri Jones, the Director of the Task Force for Human Resources, who is responsible for Force. 'We need to help raise the priority given to investment in training, and make sure that workers are given training opportunities at regular intervals throughout their working lives. The single market cannot be a success without a highly trained and flexible European workforce.'

Force is linked closely with the urgent need recognized in the European Charter of Fundamental Social Rights to give all workers access to continuing training throughout their working lives. This aspiration has been consistently supported by both sides of industry in the social dialogue.

The key to understanding the need for a programme like Force is an appreciation of the change brought about in the circumstances of European workers by an economy requiring that an increasing number of jobs are knowledge-based.

In the Joint Opinion on Education and Training which emerged from the social dialogue on 26 January 1990 this was made clear: '...company and individual needs must be clearly identified and planned in training plans or programmes appropriate to the size of the firm and drawn up in the framework of the firm's overall strategy. They should aim to develop the individual, to enhance his skills and assist him or her to adapt to changes in jobs.'

It is now widely accepted that effective training cannot be delivered in one or even two or three concentrated periods of learning, but must be constantly refreshed. This requires the collaboration and participation both of employers, and of employees, and the active support of national, local and transnational providers of training.

It is also clear that, whereas a great deal of high standard training exists, it is not nearly widespread enough to ensure that European workers are trained to world standards.

Manfred Linke/LAIF

Force's objectives set the scene for a new level of partnership between a Community training initiative and enterprises acting in partnership with each other, and with training bodies and other public and private development organizations:

■ convincing enterprises of all kinds that they need to invest in continuing training, and then encouraging them to provide it;

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■ ensuring that they can design and model their training on up-to-date information and data on the best continuing training available;

■ encouraging more innovation in training management, methodology and equipment;

■ underpinning the objectives of the single market by backing up transnational continuing training projects, and by encouraging wide exchange of experience and individual mobility;

■ helping training systems respond to labour market needs and changes by improving Community-level forecasting of occupational and qualification needs.

Three main actions, each of them developing and using Community partnerships in different ways to underpin a major expansion and improvement of quality in continuing vocational training for workers in undertakings of all types and sizes.

Action 1: Supporting innovation in continuing vocational training, involves:

■ a Community continuing training network, including, a database of good practice and information for staff in enterprises, trainers and policymakers, a bank of useful contacts, a programme of expert seminars, focusing on the investment in continuing vocational training, and on access to it, and participation in it;

■ setting up and support of national information points;

■ creation and support of a network of experts;

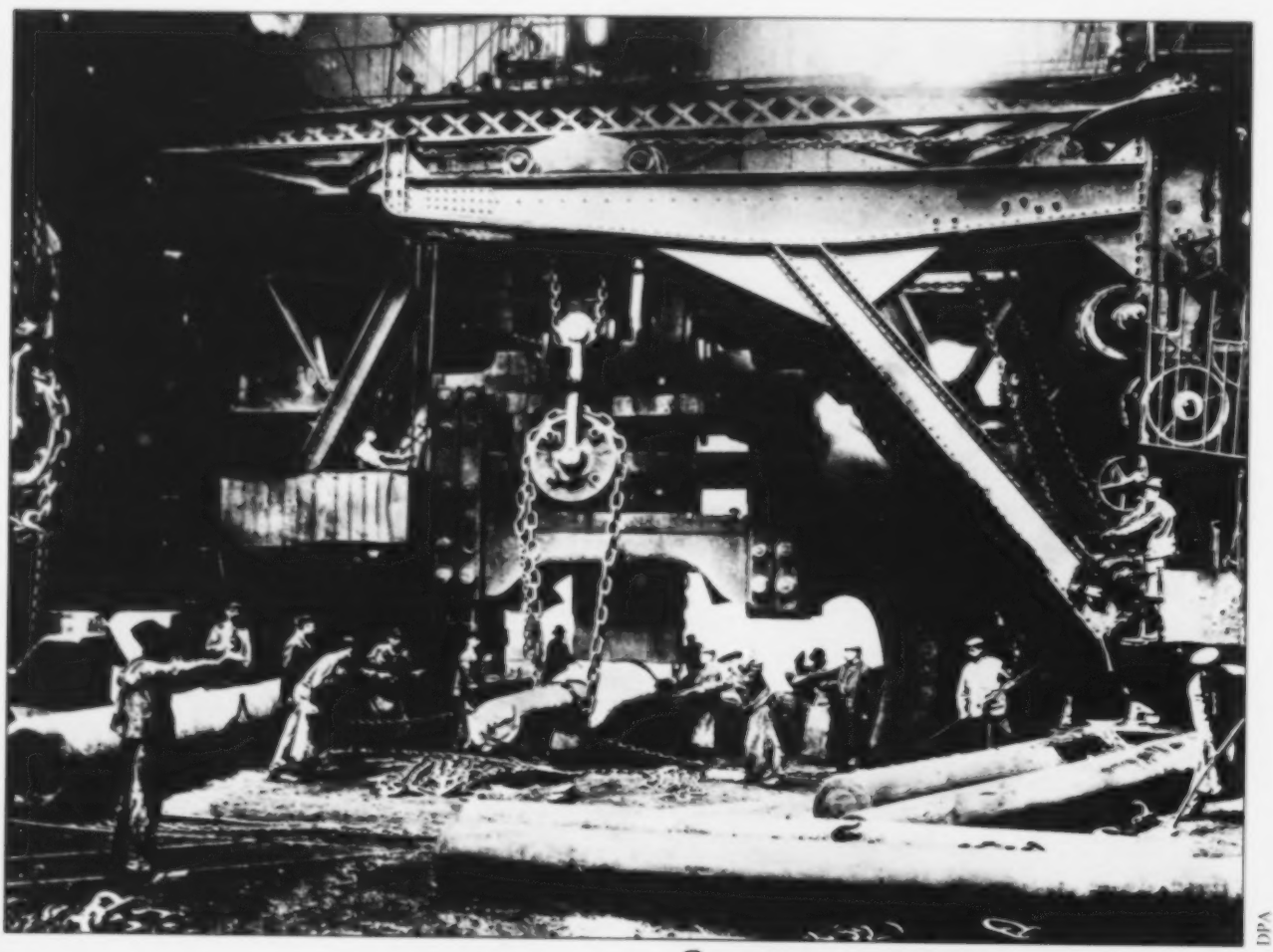
■ a programme of exchanges benefiting full-time instructors, staff in human resource departments, staff representatives in enterprises, training specialists working in regional training consortia;

■ a series of transnational and transfrontier training pilot schemes, namely enterprise-based partnerships committed to improving continuing training quality;

■ a series of sectoral surveys, major inquiries carried out into the human resource and continuing training plans of selected key sectors for the development of the single market.

Action 2: Closer cooperation between Member States in their analysis of continuing vocational training needs, and their monitoring of provision, is aimed at improving the information which enterprises use for their planning, and which governments, public authorities and training organizations use to determine policy and priorities in spending, and has the objective of promoting the coherent development of continuing vocational training throughout the Community. It will include:

■ A common instrument for analysing and comparing existing continuing training policy and practice, creating a common basis for comparing policies, provi-



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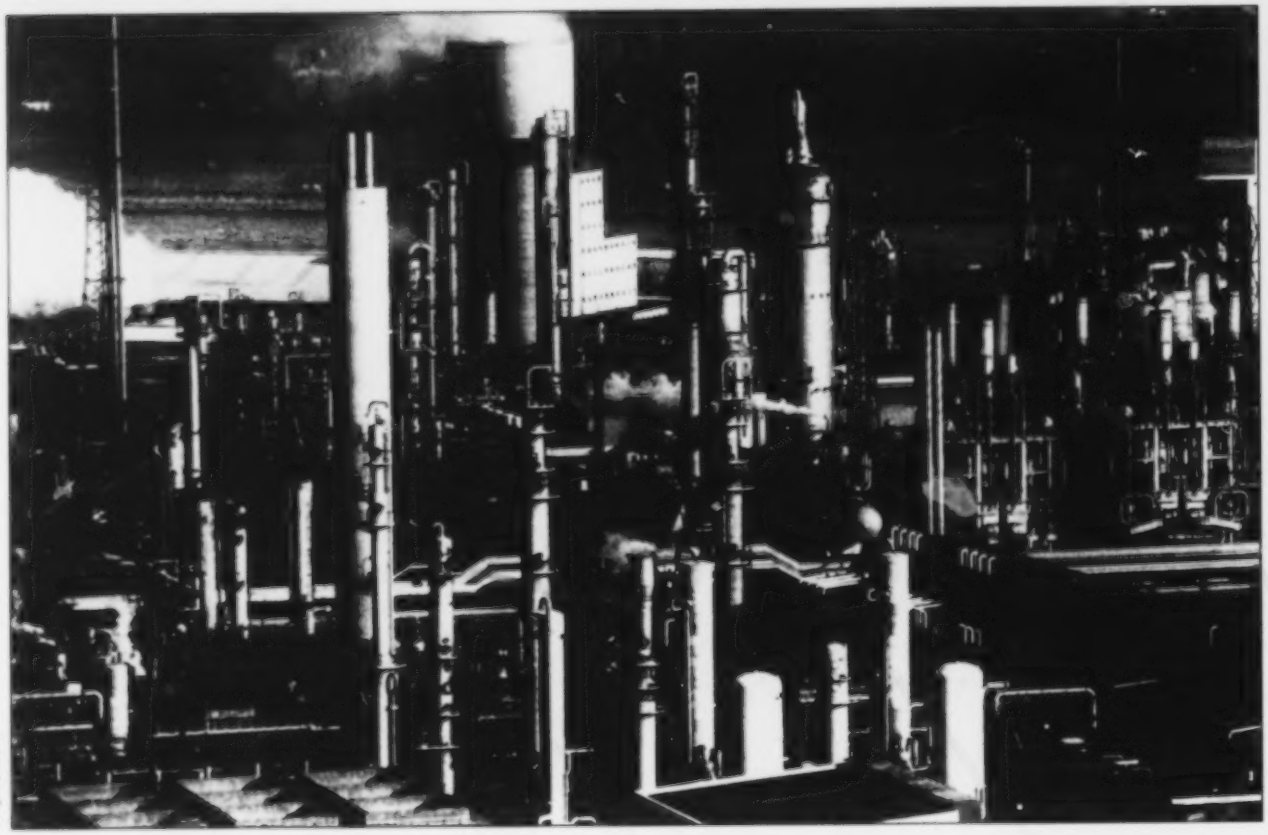

Cockerill/SIERS

sion and expenditure on continuing training from all public and private sources throughout the Community.

The information will be made available in a usable form, and at consistent and regular intervals.

■ Analysis of contractual policy on continuing vocational training and dissemination of good practice, involving collection and analysis of comparable data from all Member States on collective agreements and on individual enterprise-level agreements on continuing vocational training, and dissemination of good practice, and innovatory contractual agreements. There will also be an exchange scheme for workers and for employers' organization staff.

■ Forecasting trends in demands for qualifications and occupations, based on collection of comparable national and sectoral data, focusing on the development of enterprise or sector-based common methodology.

Action 3: Augmenting the Force network with regional consortia and transnational training partnerships financed by the European Social Fund.

The purpose of this action is to add to the expertise and the regional impact of the Force network of activities, those concerned with continuing training issues within the partnerships and consortia in Objective 1 regions, supported through the new Community initiative Euroform.

This will involve:

■ admission to the network, on the advice of the Force Committee, of partnerships and consortia focusing on the main priorities of Force — their participation will be an added value for the Force network, and for these consortia and partnerships.

Further information about Force, and how to apply to take part in it has been published by the Task Force, and a special unit will be set up in Brussels to run it. There will also be Force reference points in each Member State.

Force will combine with the other action programmes of the Task Force for Human Resources — including Petra, Eurotecnet, Comett, Lingua and Erasmus — to provide a transnational impetus for the establishment of a new European training culture for the 1990s.

CEDEFOP

Continuing training: the role of the social partners

Cooperation between training centres and employers is now widely favoured by the authorities, something that, to an extent, has been brought about by the rapid development of new technology.

New technology, however, does not merely influence production; it also affects industrial and social relations and alters the traditional pattens of collective bargaining. It is important, therefore, for all the social partners to be involved in this process.

A dual awareness is beginning to evolve. On the one hand, the community in general and the working world in particular are discovering the importance of training for the advancement of society; on the other, training providers are beginning to recognize that they have a responsibility towards the whole of society — and most people in society are workers, whether in employment or seeking work.

Continuing training has become a major cultural challenge, although the challenge has gradually shifted into the socio-economic field.

This fact is not lost on President George Bush. At a meeting at which he convened all the US State Governors, the President voiced his concern at the results of a survey which showed that, after 12 years of schooling, one in two American youngsters is unable to write a letter! In 1990 the battle to reform the educational system is regarded as more important than 'Star Wars'.

Before the recession, there was general agreement on the importance of training.

François Martou

Professor at the Catholic University of Louvain, President of the Mouvement ouvrier chrétien, Belgium

Take Belgium for example, a country I know quite well: in 1965, it was established that high levels of economic growth were primarily due to the development of the education and training system and to effective links between the individual, the workplace and the school.

Schulz/ILLSTRN

These halcyon days did not last long. On the whole, most of the schemes organized under the banner of the 'right to learn' failed. But whose fault was that? The employers, the workforce, the training providers? I believe that the time has come to evaluate the failure of systems whereby employees were allowed leave for educational purposes. The provision of training has not evolved along the lines that individuals and employers would have liked. In the workplace itself, there has been little inclination to 'waste' time and money on outside training schemes. For many workers, the physical and mental demands of taking a training course have verged on the heroic.

And so, nearly everywhere, public expenditure on education and training began to fall. Admittedly, the crisis in public funding and the burden of public indebtedness were contributory factors, but that was not the whole story. There was a loss of faith.

With a slightly more buoyant economy today, the problem of continuing training has resurfaced with greater urgency, mainly as a result of demographic trends.

In the first place, demographic trends are such that within 20 or 30 years the number of people in higher education will fall by about 25%.

Secondly, with fundamental structural changes on the job market, the decline in industrial employment is irreversible. In 1830, 60% of the labour force worked on the land. Today the figure is less than 5%, although agricultural output is much higher than it was then.

Every day sees the loss of jobs in industry, and there is no sign of this haemorrhage being staunched. We are moving into a service-based society for which we are ill-equipped in terms of job skills.

Lastly, the high level of long-term structural unemployment, particularly affecting young people and women, is becoming a permanent feature of the European social landscape.

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All these factors speak out in favour of a redeployment of continuing education for adults. But the growing sectoral provision of vocational training in separate fields will soon prove to be untenable once flexible working practices and employee mobility have to be taken into account. This is perhaps why the revival in interest in training over recent years has come mainly from the authorities and employers. This interest is not without ulterior motive. Many would support the view that 'improving skill levels reduces unemployment'.

There is all too ready a consensus as to the vital need for the reform and expansion of education and training. Who would not agree that schooling, at both lower and upper level, is inadequate? Who does not believe that it is mainly the lower skilled who are unemployed? Who would deny the evidence that a worker who gains more qualifications has a better chance of finding a job?

This consensus among a vast majority of people in society is built on the commonly held (and fragile) view that 'adult training' is a separate problem. The majority thinking that prevails in the reorganization and expansion of adult-training measures is the aim of discarding political considerations 'in a depoliticized policy debate, the outcome of efforts to neutralize... and since those efforts are geared to achieving a more natural social order, they always use the language of nature'.[1]

The particular position of adult training, placed as it is midway between the educational system — for which this is a period of growth — and the labour market, which has been reshaped by the economic crisis, is the reason for the consensus opinion that the function of training is to serve as preventive and/or emergency treatment for the social conflicts that might be precipitated by the contradictions between education and the working world.

Thirty years of concerted social action, for which the Belgian model is certainly one of the most impressive, have shown that there is a measure of interplay of relationships between the social partners, and any debate or conflict has inevitably heralded an agreement.

Steve Benbow, NJ 1983/8

In the crisis scenario, in the light of the factors mentioned (technological, monetary, energy) and their corollaries (competitiveness, indebtedness), a detailed agenda can be set for political decisions on a joint redefinition of the balance earnings and the containment of social costs.

What is created is a decor, not a context: it has too great an influence on the issue of an adult-training policy which specifically occupies the gap between social and evaluative policies and the labour market.

One compensation for occupying an uncomfortable midfield position is that one can at least perceive skills in social terms, rather than as an attribute of an individual person.

An adult-training policy cannot be shaped on the basis of an introspective or intra-pedagogic debate. It is only right to leave it to the education system to resolve a whole set of contradictions, the most important and urgent of which is undoubtedly the radical reform of technical education. Any efforts to address these contradictions within the field of adult training would be doomed to failure.

It should also be left to the labour market and to fiscal, economic and monetary policymakers to deal with matters within their own sphere, in particular the increasingly temporary nature of recruitment and the tendency to organize the transition from school to work as if it were a process of internalizing the new rules of the market.

But the fact remains that training now has the wind behind its sails. Everyone seems to agree on the need to develop training, sometimes to the detriment of school-based education. Since this unanimity is emerging from the economic and social sphere, it should pave the way for negotiations. The protagonists will be not only the authorities, employers and unions but also the continuing education movements and the universities.

[1] P. Bourdieu, 'Décrire et prescrire' (description and prescription), *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (proceedings of social science research), May 1981.

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Roles for training: the reshaping of work, mobility and earnings?

An issue facing many European countries is the radical restructuring of their labour markets, affecting job content, job mobility and the basic rules governing those labour markets. The patterns of job mobility, not only internally within companies but also on the open labour market, have altered profoundly, and continuing training is required to perform an ever more active role in coping with these changes. In some countries, policies on manpower retraining outside the company are based on a fairly substantial mobilization of institutionalized training; in the same countries and in others, although to varying degress, public and private-sector policies on the provision of continuing training at the workplace are helping to deal with internal changes in the composition of skills and jobs.

The aim of this article is to describe the links that are currently being reconstructed between the technological and organizational changes affecting the workplace, new methods of workforce management and the role of retraining in this process, the main focus being on in-company restructuring.

Thirty monographs on individual companies drawn up in six Member States of the European Community (Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom), have provided the basis for the following considerations.[1] Most of the companies involved are large firms in various sectors of industry that have earned a reputation for developing an active continuing training policy in the light of the laws and regulations in each of the countries in question. We cannot extrapolate generalizations as to the new practices reported on the strength of these case histories; our paper is more of a discussion of the practices observed.

Philippe Méhaut, Marie Claire Villeval
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Before analysing the ways in which continuing training contributes to altering the patterns of work organization at the workplace, we describe the diversity of the technological and organizational changes taking place on-the-job. We shall then go on to highlight the main differences among countries in their ways of mobilizing retraining in support of internal change. Finally, we shall review the reasons for favouring an internal restructuring of skills, rather than the strategy of looking outside the workplace and replacing one category of manpower by another.

Current changes and their impact on skill requirements

Sweeping technological and organizational changes...

The 30 monographs identified three main categories of technological, commercial and organizational change as being closely interrelated with employment, work, mobility and skills.

Changes affecting product technologies

There are two options: a marginal change in the product, leaving its basic technological structure unaffected or a radical change in its technological structure. An example of the latter is the development of electronics in the engineering industry, entailing a number of wholesale changes in design, quality testing and assembly work. A third course of action is to diversify products to gain new outlets. Nevertheless, in view of the tendency of industrial groups to 'go back to their knitting' — to concentrate on the trade in which they specialize — any decision to diversify essentially means that they develop new but fairly similar product lines, rather than investing in entirely new markets.

Changes affecting production technologies...

In the case-studies, the changes were organized in the light of two principles. The principle of fluidity has introduced the process logic even into traditionally sequential industries and into those segments of the production line which have not yet been automated. The principle of technical flexibility comes at a more advanced stage of flexible automation, in that the plant normally used for long production series can be used for shorter runs and for a variety of goods in response to fluctuating demand (e.g. by the introduction of more flexible machines, cutting down on the time spent on retooling).

Changing the pattern of trade relations...

The twofold aim is to establish new market openings and influence consumer behaviour by various means, e.g. by a policy of reducing stock levels and planning production in such a way as to be able to respond more immediately to the demands of trading partners, greater product modularization — which implies narrower ranges and demands a more rapid adjustment capacity of the workforce — and the imposition of more stringent and extensive constraints on subcontractors (through a 'just in time' policy, with the client enterprise stipulating quality and even design standards.

These three categories of change are combined with a macroeconomic tendency towards the distortion of sectoral structures as a result of several trends: the lower level of industrial employment and a shift of employment to the service industries, the changing pattern of

manufacturing industries to the detriment of traditional sectors such as the suppliers of intermediate goods and the trend towards the international concentration of capital, combined with the growth of small and medium-sized businesses. This has a direct impact on decisions on redundancies and also on the rules governing the allocation and use of manpower.

... which affect the organization of labour and skills

All these technological, commercial and organizational changes imply four types of change in the organization of labour.

A breakdown — differing in degree in individual countries and sectors — can be observed in the 'one job-one task-one person' concept. This is due to the development of various forms of multi-skilling and job enrichment through the incorporation of responsibility for routine maintenance and quality control into the job. The result is a profound change in the division of labour and inter-group relationships. But where (as in the United Kingdom) there are demarcations between trades, the situation is less advanced and more conflict-prone.

■ Work groups are being restructured, acquiring a good deal of autonomy and assuming responsibility for the collective performance of all tasks throughout a given production segment as well as for the internal organization of their own work. This restructuring of team work is particularly advanced in Italian, German and French companies.

■ At the same time, the hierarchical rules are undergoing change. For example, formen's duties are changing; this group is now more involved (in France and in Italy) in production management and the training of work teams.

■ Finally, a trend is emerging towards a reform of the rules determining wage levels. The first stage is the tendency to individualize wages and incorporate complex output indicators into the rules (indicators of productivity, quality or the achievement of targets).

These technical and organizational changes are inseparably bound up with the sharp fall in the size of companies' workforces. A significant growth in activity in this period of economic upturn has not sufficed to counteract the trend towards a cut in the number of jobs, especially as the result of the trend may be greater recourse to particular forms of employment (temporary, part-time, etc.). The companies surveyed are therefore trying to secure new room to manoeuvre, either internally and/or on the outside labour market, by offering incentives for voluntary mobility and setting up new forms of internal mobility through multi-skilling, training for social advancement and continuing training.

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These changing patterns are affecting job structure and content, and are leading to a radical rethinking of skill requirements.

We do not yet know whether the process of automation will, in the future, generate a new trend towards making work more routine, but as things now stand the prevailing tendency is gradually to raise the level of skills required, rather than a general downgrading. This raising of standards may be the result of both a passive factor (redundancy of early retirement for less skilled shopfloor workers) and higher expectations as to the paper qualifications of new job applicants. This illustrates a strategy used to shift from one category of manpower to another, as well as growing workforce segmentation, based on more selective employment practices. If a strategy of this kind is employed, the higher quality of labour at the workplace as a result of higher skill requirements will inevitably add to the dualism on the labour market.

Job skills can, however, also be improved internally, in particular through recourse to continuing training. Three types of qualitative change will then affect the skills demanded of the work force:

(i) a growth in technical knowledge, reconstituting the basic skills of employees (calling for familiarity with electronics, information technology and statistics), as well as higher educational standards and the acquisition of skills in new areas to meet the need for multi-skilling;

(ii) improved communication skills linked, with changes in the labour organization, the rethinking of certain forms of job compartmentalization, the strengthening of links between working groups and the imposition of economic constraints upon them;

(iii) an extension of the organizational skills demanded, both by greater autonomy at work and by more stringent production management rules ('just in time' procedures, the optimization of operating times, etc.).

All this points the way to a need for a higher basic standard of knowledge as well as changes in the demand for the various forms of knowledge, expertise and behaviour.

Faced with all these new patterns of production, organization, work and employment, the companies in question in every country are encountering a number of difficulties in the management of skills. But it also emerges clearly that the attempt to correct imbalances in skills and training by looking outside the company is proving to be an inadequate solution. Continuing training within the workplace today is assuming new and multiple functions, although the degree of recourse to in-house training may vary from one company and country to another.

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A composite mobilization of training by the company for the management of internal changes

In-house training may be mobilized by the company to improve three factors.

Transformation of job content

Although our sample of companies was selected because of the firms' reputation as being more advanced in their training practices than the regulations in their respective countries, some of them nevertheless show a fairly timid training policy, heavily dependent on the external economic situation and a particular set of contingencies to which training is expected to adjust. New technologies are introduced without prior thought as to the structure of skills available and required, and expenditure on training is very much determined by the level of activity. Such situations are particularly common in British companies. In general, this is associated with slower progress towards questioning the Taylor approach to work management.

On the other hand, there has obviously been a rethinking of the mobilization of training in large companies, generally those operating in the field of advanced technology and principally in France, Italy and Spain. In such companies, training is directly incorporated into the process of radical change in the job content and the functional and hierarchical division of labour. The main features of these training policies are as follows:

- a growing investment in training (expenditure often exceeds 2% of the wage bill and the average expectation of training is as high as 15 hours or more per year per employee);
- formal planning covering a period of several years;
- less selective access to training, with unskilled workers no longer being systematically excluded from the type of course providing general retraining or basic information;
- more sophisticated training schemes, combining general education, theory, training on the job, courses on inter-group and intra-group communication, management training, etc.

One idea is that training can be regarded as a totally integrated part of the process of change in employment: training operations are seen as part of the restructuring of working teams and the prerequisite for their cooperation. Job content, rules on multi-skilling and quality control regulations are established either by general negotiation on working conditions, plus a review of training (in particular in Italian companies) or, alternatively, especially in French companies, in direct connection with training schemes.

The second idea, according to which training tends to be regarded more in anticipation of change, training policy is planned even before changes in labour organization are introduced. Change is presented as an improvement, offering a greater degree of freedom, without a specifically preset end objective. The internal dynamics of training operations are expected to make a further contribution to decisions on the content of tasks and labour organization in the light of the skill standards actually attained by employees and via selection among those employees.

Mobility management and regulations

Changes in job quality are affecting both the ways in which the workforce is allocated and the entire process of internal job mobility. Shopfloor jobs account for a decreasing proportion of the total number. New trades are emerging: the aim is greater production flexibility, in particular by a reconsideration of the frontiers between jobs in the functional division of labour. Once a strategy on internal restructuring has been chosen, all this implies a quantitative and qualitative growth in mobility, sometimes even a change in the rules governing that mobility. It should at the same time be borne in mind that in France, for example, internal mobility has tended to fall in times of recession because of the importance attached to length of service in manpower administration regulations and the age

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pyramid in companies, and that similar tendencies have been observed in Italy as a result of guaranteed retention of jobs and the Cassa Integrazione Guadagni system.

From certain case-studies, it is evident that training policy has not been constructed with any particular objective associated with the mobility management in mind. Nevertheless, in a great majority of companies, training is explicitly regarded as a support of the creation of new lines of mobility and rules governing mobility. One of the main objectives of training in multiple skills is horizontal mobility between work stations. In the British companies investigated, particularly striking is the number of courses designed to increase the standard of multi-skilling, both for maintenance workers and for young wage-earners (covered by the Youth Training Scheme). The challenge for employers here is to bypass the trades system and introduce a more flexible allocation of employees to jobs (i.e. not just requiring employees to tackle a range of maintenance jobs but also to combine shopfloor with maintenance work). Similar tendencies are encountered in the French, Italian and Spanish companies covered by the monographs. The aim is to develop a twofold set of skills to promote greater flexibility in the allocation of manpower to jobs in response to changes in the pattern of demand and in the workload allocated to teams along the production line.

Another use of training is related to the realignment of vertical lines of mobility. In French companies, courses are offered in rapidly growing fields of specialization (e.g. electronics in electrical manufacturing firms or quality control in engineering concerns), and they are directly used in the process of singling out employees for promotion. This demonstrates a change in the rules hitherto regulating in-company mobility. In the 1960s and 1970s, promotion regulations used to be based primarily on seniority and loyalty to the organization. Training was given only after promotion, whereas the tendency today is to take the training first and then be promoted.

The determination of earnings

If one accepts the essence of the theory of human capital, the impact of *ad hoc* training funded by the employer on earnings should be relatively low. In most of our case histories the opposite was true: there was a positive ratio between training, labour reorganization and a rise in the level of earnings. In three Italian companies, e.g. where overall collective bargaining had taken place on the labour organization and multi-skilling, an employee who attended a training scheme tended to improve his status in terms of job classifications and earnings. Similarly, in two electrical manufacturing companies in France and Spain, where the principal change was the opportunity offered to the unskilled worker for promotion mobility, success in a training course implied an improvement in earnings.

Nevertheless, as things now stand, regular continuing training is not usually a factor incorporated in any systematic manner into the rules on grading and levels of earnings. In most cases, attendance of training courses and final success in those courses, i.e. obtaining the required qualifications, pave the way for an individual rise in earnings, without however institutionalizing the link between the level of training, paper qualifications and grading. In practice, one of the main effects of internal training is to call into question the previous methods of collective regulation of earnings by introducing a more individualized method of fixing those earnings.

Because of its multiple effects on labour reorganization, the reconsideration of job mobility regulations and the manner of determining earnings, training is seen as one of the major vectors of change in a Ford-type philosophy of wage structures.

Specific national differences and the method of restructuring labour markets

Different forms of recourse to continuing training in individual companies and countries...

Looking at the degree of recourse to training and its role in the dynamics of employment and labour (bearing in mind that it is almost impossible to arrive at a reliable, comparable measurement of wages), the situation shown by the various case histories may be summarized as follows.

At one extreme, training sometimes tends to be used purely for adapting workers to a given work station and facilitating a fairly marginal degree of mobility. These are the customary 'conventional' workplace situations (limited recourse to training and close dependence on the economic situation, narrow-based, specific training, inequality of access to training) in an only slightly modified Taylor-type organization. This situation is characteristic of most of the British case histories. As far as job mobility is concerned, of course, it is readily apparent that training (of the multi-skilling type) is used to breakdown the rules and the demarcations between trades. But, bearing in mind the nature of such training, there is no sign of alternative rules emerging.

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The Italian, Spanish and French case histories show a rather different picture of the intensity of training and its effect on the philosophy underlying work and employment. In the companies in these three countries, the tendency appears to be a growing recourse to training by the employer, the development of medium-term planning, and lesser dependence on the outside economic situation. In the Italian case histories, training is fairly often an issue included in negotiations on the organization of labour. It makes a direct contribution to developments in the organization of labour (especially in the forms of group work where a high degree of multi-skilling is required) and it promotes horizontal mobility. In France, and to a lesser degree in Spain, a wider variety of situations is encountered: in some cases the position is the same as in Italy in that training affects developments in work (but the organization and content of work and training are not included in collective bargaining, as in Italy); in other cases, longer and more general training courses are set up, making a more marked impact on vertical mobility within the company (and possibly on outside mobility), without being immediately related to any given specific task. The acquisition of course certificates or diplomas becomes an important factor, since this criterion is incorporated into the rules on individual assessments and career development in the lines of mobility.

These differences can be explained by four societal characteristics:

- firstly, the structure and nature of the education system, which has a twofold influence: on the place of general education and vocational training, and on the degree of institutionalization of the training system (i.e. whether training is provided by the public system of whether different partners are involved, whether training provision is relatively independent of the labour market);

- secondly, the degree of public intervention in the organization of continuing training within the workplace: the philosophy of job-sharing and total autonomy of the enterprise as in the United Kingdom and Germany, a more incentive-geared system as in Italy, the statutory obligation to provide training, as in France, etc.;

- thirdly, the historic nature of internal job mobility in large companies, depending on whether it is more or less developed;

- fourthly, tendencies in the system of industrial relations, for example whether negotiations are conducted on an inter-trade level and are closely interlinked with laws and public measures, whether negotiations are conducted purely within a branch of industry or within a company, and whether or not their results are extended to other industries and companies, etc.

... which once again calls into question the relationships between internal and external labour markets

Even where the decision is to embark on the internal restructuring of manpower, this does not exclude collective redundancies. The need for lay-offs arise, e.g. from higher work productivity and distortions in the sectorial job distribution. In the case histories considered, redundancy was sometimes accompanied by collective training measures to encourage people to leave the company or to seek alternative employment. In this respect, it is of interest that the countries in which the authorities have developed incentives and compulsory measures in the field of in-company continuing training are also those in which substantial regulations exist on the subject of mobilizing training in the event of wide-scale redundancies. For example, in France and Spain (where in-house training is on the increase), measures have been introduced by the public sector and by certain sectors of industry to support companies during restructuring and provide help with training, something that has not happened in the United Kingdom and Germany. Italy is a special case, because the existence of the Cassa Integrazione has served as a substitute for alternative support measures.

Quite apart from the aim of achieving net job losses, however, the principle of recourse to the external market (by making employees redundant and then recruiting others from outside) may be adopted for other reasons. Some employers may regard redundancy, followed by replacement, as a strategy to alter the nature of their workforce at a lower cost. In such companies, earnings are often related to length of service. The idea is to reduce the wage bill by bringing in young people to replace older employees. But there may be other reasons for such substitution besides the purely financial. A changeover may make organizational changes more acceptable and easier to introduce. The longest-serving employees in a company ('hard-core' employees) are often those most reluctant to accept the introduction of changes affecting their basic job skills and status. In the same way, where unionization is strongly rooted in the philosophy inherent to a given trade, trade unions may oppose a measure because it threatens their power base. Recruiting young people with no tradition of unionism — particularly at a time of job shortages and high youth unemployment — to replace existing employees may then be a means of sidestepping union opposition.

These substitution strategies, however, have marked limitations. Attempts to recruit a new workforce may be frustrated by shortages of skills on the external market. There is no guarantee that at the time of recruitment training as evidenced by a diploma can really replace certain aspects of the redundant workers' knowledge and expertise as regards the products manufactured, production processes and control practices. The relative stability of existing employees may in fact be a guarantee of work groups sharing a common identity and being reasonably efficient in their work, facilitating the pursuit of common objectives.

In practice the tendency to opt for substitution or for other strategies for the internal restructuring of skills with the help of continuing training depends, at least in part, on the prevailing structure on the national labour market. In France, Spain and Italy, where secondary-type labour markets or internal company markets predominate, and where the educational system is (or was) predominantly public and general, there is at present growing recourse to continuing training by employers. The former characteristics of internal job mobility have helped to create specific job skills, and untrained workers may have had opportunities for promotion within their company — usually by virtue of the rules on length of service — to posts that would have been closed to them on the open market. In such cases there is strong resistance to redundancies, since the workforce perceives the risk that the skills it has acquired may be devalued in the eyes of the outside world. This may be evidenced by the substantial drop in voluntary mobility between one company and another in France during the recession and the ensuing strengthening of institutional regulations protecting workers and providing support for external mobility. On the other hand, internal mobility is rendered easier and more acceptable on this type of market than on the open market. The continued development of in-company job mobility

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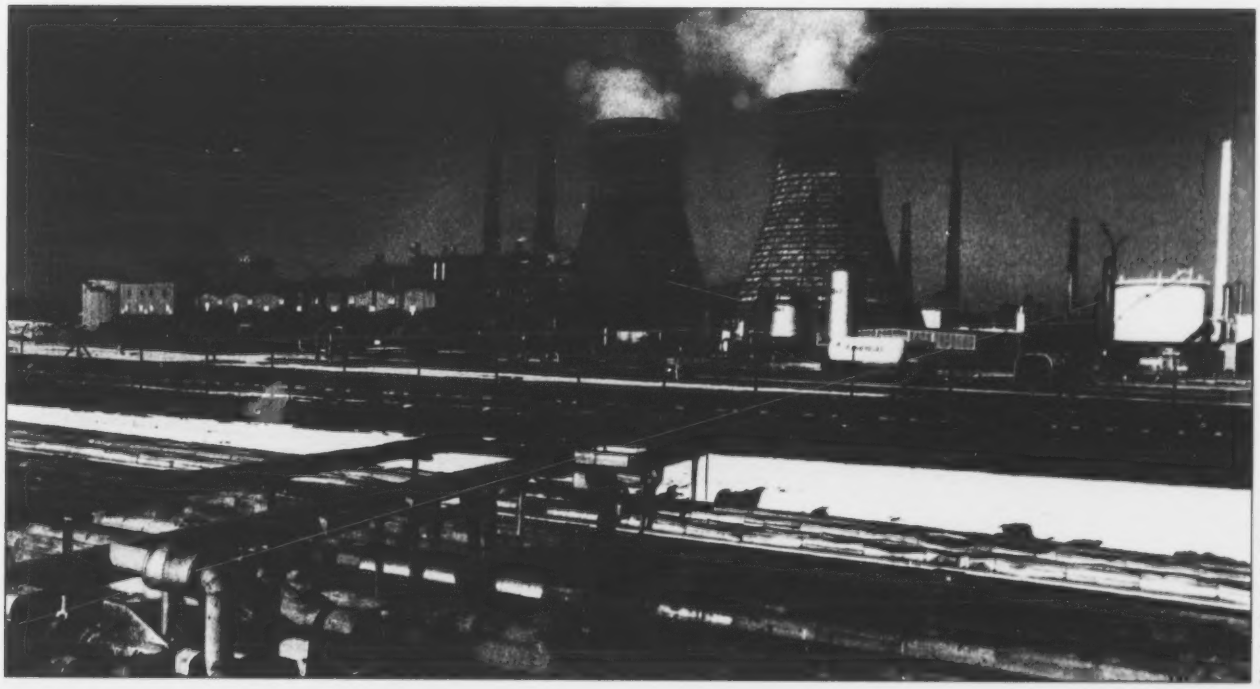

Manfred Linke/LAIF

(transformed through the more systematic inclusion of continuing training) helps to contain the cost of adjustment and operational problems linked with restructuring, mainly because of the existing collective job skills. On the other hand, technological and organizational requirements such as those described above make it necessary to remodel job skills and revise the rules on mobility. New lines of mobility have to be constructed which are less closely related to length of service and 'demographic' criteria, and which are based on greater interaction between theoretical and empirical knowledge and on new forms of intra-group cooperation calling for better communication skills.

In the United Kingdom, on the other hand, and perhaps to a lesser degree in Germany, where 'trade' labour markets dominate (although with major differences between the two countries) and where initial vocational training has a different status, employers seem to resort to continuing training to a lesser extent. Internal restructuring may be made more difficult, in certain companies, due to the greater compartmentalization of knowledge and the strict rules regulating access to certain jobs and mobility. In the United Kingdom, it is clear that attempts to alter the lines of demarcation between trades and vocational groups call into question not only the structure of apprenticeship, but the very foundations of trade unions. This makes it unlikely that unions would press for the development of training as such to back this kind of restructuring. At the same time, from the management point of view, the rules on access to jobs at the heart of labour market regulations must be radically revised before in-company continuing training can be developed to a truly significant extent.

These few analytical ideas have emerged, we would point out, from a very small sample of companies. If the growth in in-company training is confirmed, at least in certain countries, great importance should be attached to far more detailed information on this phenomenon, which is often not covered by existing statistics and observation. The importance of public intervention in this movement has been noted elsewhere. This raises the question of Community-level possibilities and forms of incentive, which obviously should be related to the individual features of each country's national system of employment and work.

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1 This discussion paper is based on research conducted on behalf of the European Community: Mehaut, P., Villeval, M.C., La mobilisation de la formation par l'enterprise dans des opérations de reconversion interne et externe de la main-d'oeuvre — une comparaison sur six pays de la CEE (The mobilization of training by the company in the internal and external restructuring of labour — a comparison of six EEC countries), 1990, Nancy, GREE Research Report for EEC (DG V) — photocopied document.

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Views on the development of continuing vocational education and training in Great Britain

'The message to employers and trainers is clear — the labour force will have to rely increasingly on developing the skills of existing employees.'
'Our real skill shortage is not about jobs we can't fill; it is about the quality and competence of people at all levels who do fill jobs.'

Several recent reports and articles on British vocational education and training begin with statements like those above. The stated need is to improve the skills and competence of all those at present working. Yet the writers invariably continue to confuse the needs of mature workers with the education and training of young persons and new entrants to the workforce. Despite our quite rational perception that mature, adult workers need more and better continuing training and education, our primitive, emotional feeling is that the needs of young employees are more urgent and important.

This paper will try to show that this pattern of thought and policy has persistently repeated itself in Britain at least for the last 25 years. Time and again the problem has been identified that improved continuing education and training is vital to our British economy and society — as, indeed, it is to any modern economy. Yet the problem is still with us and is as acute as it has ever been. It will also be argued that, even though there are currently some hopeful ideas and initiatives, present policies do not seem likely to give sufficient priority to the training needs of mature employees.

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Labour force projections, Great Britain

Age	1989	2001	% Change
16 - 19	2 413	2 158	— 10.6
20 - 24	3 671	2 797	— 23.8
25 - 34	6 818	6 688	— 1.9
35 - 44	6 532	7 553	+ 15.6
45 - 54	5 103	6 102	+ 19.6
55-59 (f)/64 (m)	2.679	2.883	+ 7.6
60 (f)/65 (m) +	827	673	— 18.6
All ages	28.042	28.883	+ 2.9

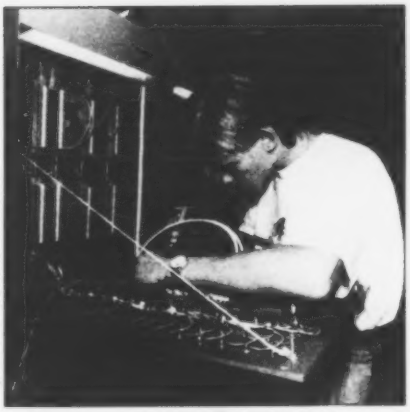
Source: Employment Department

The table shows that in Britain in 1989 there were about 6 million employees aged 16-24 and 18 million aged 25-54, a ratio of 1 to 3. In 2001 there will be 5 million aged 16-24 and 20 million aged 25-54, a ratio of 1 to 4. This change has been presented, alarmingly, as 'the demographic time bomb'. The figures certainly do show a significant change in the numbers of young people entering the workforce over the next decade and in the ratio of younger to mature employees. Some employers, notably those who employ young workers on short engagements at low wages, will no doubt find it difficult to recruit young people. However, since youth unemployment has been with us for several years, far from being a 'time bomb' this drop in their numbers seems more likely to defuse a chronic economic and social problem. Moreover, the resources saved on supporting and training unemployed young people offer an opportunity to meet the needs of that much larger group, the existing workforce.

The most important message from the numbers in the table is that there are at this present time three times as many mature 'prime age' employees as there are young ones. Statistics on training and education are sparse and difficult to interpret, but the evidence is that about half of all training and more than half of all education is received by people under 25. One in three employed adults in Britain report that they have never received any training, a similar proportion have no educational or vocational qualifications. This lack of training at work and the imbalance in provision for younger and mature workers must be remedied if Britain's economic performance is to improve over the next few years.

There are simple messages in the table's data which are continually overlooked. There are 28 million workers in Britain with about 600 000 new entrants each

year. Inevitably, the workforce is renewed about every 40 years. A young, new entrant takes, say, three to five years to become a full contributor; perhaps five to fifteen years to become a fully active craftsman, professional, supervisor or manager. In many sectors of employment working methods, organization and, particularly, technology change every few years. We know all this very well and yet carry on devoting our main resources to the young when we know that there is a huge unmet requirement to educate, train and retrain those already in employment.



Jürgen Bindrim/LAIF

The creation and growth of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC)

In 1973, after a national debate on Britain's training arrangements, the MSC was created. Its mission was to take charge of national manpower policy: 'to elevate the importance of vocational education and training and redefine its contribution to productivity and national development'.

The Commission itself was a board of 10 persons representing employers, trades unions, local authorities and education with a government appointed chairman.

In 1974 a Labour government took over from the Conservatives. Although Labour were probably more ideologically committed to the MSC becoming 'a powerful body responsible for the development and execution of a comprehensive manpower policy', circumstances intervened. Inflation and a large balance of payments deficit made public money scarce; growing numbers of unemployed workers called for immediate measures. Long-term plans had to wait: temporary employment subsidies and job creation programmes were quickly introduced. The attention quickly turned to the young unemployed. Vocational preparation for young people became a priority. Although it published a new report in 1976, 'Towards a comprehensive manpower policy', the MSC was obliged to act on behalf of the Secretary of State for Employment. This meant more measures to combat the effects of rising youth unemployment. The policy was applied only to the needs of the young — at school, unemployed and in employment. Apart from a modest training opportunities programme for some of the unemployed, older workers, employed or not, were left largely to fend for themselves. By the end of the Labour administration in 1979 the MSC had grown in size and importance but implementation of its grandiose plans for national manpower and training measures had been restricted mainly to various schemes for young persons: a work experience programme; the youth opportunities programme; unified vocational preparation to provide a bridge between school and work.

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There had been dissatisfaction amongst employers with the costs and bureaucracy legally imposed by the recently formed Industrial Training Boards. All political parties recognized that vocational education and training were not meeting industrial and commercial manpower needs. This new body was created to revitalize the nation's manpower and make education and training more relevant to its economic goals.

The contribution of Industrial Training Boards (ITBs)

ITBs were created by the Industrial Training Act of 1964. By 1970, 27 sectors of industry were covered by these Boards, from agriculture and air transport to shipbuilding and steel. In their early years ITBs were funded wholly by levies on their respective industries but from 1973 the government, through the MSC paid all their operating costs.

ITBs were concerned almost totally with people in employment. Although they were used by the MSC as agents to set up schemes of work experience and training for the young unemployed, their primary concern was to ensure that the firms in their sector had proper training arrangements for all employees, particularly those with skills vital to their industry. Some skill shortages received special help. The Air Transport and Travel ITB, for example, secured government funds to set up a training scheme for helicopter pilots for North Sea oil exploration.

There was, then, a mismatch between the ITBs' concern for their industries and employees, the government's concern for the unemployed, and the MSC's concern for national manpower needs. Whether for those or other reasons, in 1981 the government settled the matter by abolishing 17 of the 24 ITBs then in operation. More recently all the remainder, with the sole exception of the Construction ITB, have lost their legal status.

It is impossible to estimate how much continuing vocational training was done as a result of ITBs' efforts. The 'Funding study' of vocational education and training in Britain, published by the Training Agency in 1989, showed a much larger volume of training being paid for by employers than many observers had ex-

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pected. ITBs may have been more effective than is commonly supposed. However effective ITBs actually were, their main concern was with our subject: continuing vocational education and training. Their abolition strengthens our major thesis: that the training needs of those in employment are said to be a priority but that actions taken do not match the rhetoric.

The MSC is replaced by Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)

In 1979 a Conservative Government was elected; unemployment continued to rise; the MSC carried on. Again, the main priority was the youth opportunities programme to provide employment and training for unemployed school leavers. In 1981 a policy document was issued offering: 'A new training initiative'; the three principles stated in this document influenced national training policy for the next seven years. The principles were:

- To make skill training more flexible, available, relevant and progressive.
- To give all young people under 18 opportunities for education or planned, work-related training.
- To create wide opportunities for adults 'to acquire, increase or update their skills and knowledge'.

The aim was consistent with the MSC's original purpose: to transform the entire workforce. As previously, however, the main priority remained young people. There were several initiatives aimed at employers — local grants to employers, local employer networks and others. In later years these were amalgamated into a programme called business growth training with five strands to cover all sizes of business from the individual starting up to the large firm introducing a new training idea. The funding and staff resources devoted to these adult initiatives was never more than a fraction of those aimed at young persons and, increasingly, at initiatives in further and higher education.

In January 1989 a Government White Paper was issued setting out future policy for training. This announced the setting up of Training and Enterprise Councils in England and Wales to assure local management of training. In April 1990 several of these began operating. It is planned that 80 will be set up within two years.

In parallel with this TEC initiative the scope and power of the use declined. First the Employment service was separated and the MSC became the Training Commission. Then, when the trade unions refused to support Employment Training (ET), a scheme to provide for the long-term unemployed, the Commission was disbanded and the organization became the Training Agency, reporting direct to the Secretary of State for Employment.

Because TECs are taking over responsibility for the Agency's main schemes, YT and ET, many of the staff in Sheffield are no longer needed. Staff members are reducing. A review of the Agency's future is being carried out.

Manfred VOLLMER

Higher and further education

In Britain higher education leads to a qualification beyond GCE 'A' level or a National Diploma (NVQ levels 4 or 5) further education is far less well defined. 'The Senior Chief Inspector sharply describes it as "a jungle in which talent and ability are lost".'

This last quotation, and much of the content of this section comes from an excellent report, 'More means different', by Sir Christopher Ball, published by the Training Agency in 1990. The subtitle of the report is 'widening access to higher education'. The main title is a response to a previous report by traditionalists, 'More means worse', arguing that giving more students access to higher education simply means lowering standards.

Sir Christopher is much more optimistic about the maintenance of standards but realistic about any increase of funding. He advocates expansion; increasing cohesion between education and vocational training; an increase in public funding and an even greater increase in private funding; and much greater acceptance by employers of their responsibilities for solving the problems of skill shortages.

Again, however, the report fails fully to acknowledge the overriding importance of better provision for the mature. Attention continually turns to the large numbers of young people who do not receive any higher or further education. The report does say that:

'Post-compulsory education is a muddle: it requires restructuring'.

I understand that Sir Christopher is working on another report to suggest ways of doing this.

Conclusion

Our conclusions about past measures and future policy should by now be clear. Past attempts to improve continuing voca-

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tional education and training for the mature employed have been constantly diluted or diverted by concern for the young and unemployed. Present measures, both in education and training, are muddled and inadequate to the task. There is concern in many quarters about our training arrangements. The current response to this is the formation of Training and Enterprise Councils: an act of faith of which outcomes are as yet uncertain.

Precisely because Britain has trained and educated too few young people in the past it has now many mature adults who lack development but are capable of benefiting from it.

Instead of concentrating on better provision for the young and hoping that some adults will also participate we should ensure much wider and deeper participation for adults in all forms of education and training.

It is often observed that our universities went through their most exciting and productive phase after the Second World War. Mature men and women recommencing their education after serving in the forces or in other demanding work brought experience and skills which greatly enriched undergraduate life and study. The success of the Open University shows mature demand. There exists the opportunity to create a mix of the mature and the young in higher education.

In Britain governments seems to fear that the more resources they provide for training the less employers will feel obliged to train. Study of other systems in Europe, notably Germany and the Netherlands, suggests that if government is willing to provide resources and support for initial vocational education then employers will reciprocate with continuing training. A working hypothesis is that government concern and example fosters employer commitment and provision. Similarly, the evidence is that the more education and training individuals have had in the past, the more they are likely to demand in the future.

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Continuing vocational training in The Netherlands: developments and debates

Continuing vocational training in The Netherlands is in a state of flux: the number of participants is growing, increased funding is being made available and policy-makers are focusing greater attention on the question. It is also in the throes of restructuring and transition as a result of new legislation. These are also features of the intellectual and political debate surrounding this branch of adult education. Some of the main elements of the debate are discussed below. First, however, we outline the reference points of the debate, i.e. the radical developments taking place in continuing vocational training (*cf.* Kraayvanger, *et al.*, 1989).

Diversity and complexity

The field of continuing vocational training in The Netherlands is a diverse and complex one and the great variety of the schemes often makes it difficult for the outsider to see the wood for the trees. Many parties with differing interests are involved, at national, regional and local levels, in widely differing and often inadequately coordinated arrangements. A comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework is still lacking, though legislation covering particular aspects of the field is now being prepared or implemented; to what extent future legislation will bring greater coherence into what is currently a fragmented situation remains to be seen. In the private sector too a restructuring of activities and resources is under way.

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The core of continuing vocational training comprises mainstream vocational education for adults, training in the framework of employment services and the training actitivies of particular employers and industries. The field is completed by guidance, bridging and supervisory activities, elements of general education in both mainstream/public and commercial/private institutions and the training components of other public schemes.

The diversity of continuing vocational training is reflected in, among other things, the varied nature of the arrangements, encompassing providers, managers, management forms, participants and objectives and in the quantitative and qualitative developments now taking place. In The Netherlands, continuing vocational training has traditionally been highly compartmentalized, marked in the public sector by complicated, non-uniform and often uncoordinated legislation. Since 1986 the Minister for Education and Science has had responsibility for, and the job of coordinating, adult education (except in the areas of personal development and sociocultural work). The main legislative responsibility in the area of continuing vocational training rests with the Ministry for Education and Science and the Ministry for Economic Affairs, which also constitute the major source of funding. Legislation on adult education, both vocational and general, has many interfaces with other areas of public policy, notably employment and labour market policy, economic and technological policy, general cultural policy, equal opportunities policy, policy with respect to minority groups, etc.

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Restructuring and new legislation

For many years there have been calls for legislation aimed at harmonizing the various forms of adult education, and in 1985 an Adult Education Framework Act finally came into force. Further legislation was needed to flesh out the main components of the Act, however, and this is still under consideration. A significant advance was nevertheless made in 1987 when the National Basic Education Scheme came into operation, bringing in its wake a uniform planning, policy und funding system for educational activities and services aimed at adults with a low level of education. Another scheme which began operation in 1987 is intended to ensure coherent provision at regional level for employment-related training for groups whose labour market position is weak. Finally, the Recognition of Educational Institutions Act also came into force in 1987; its purpose is to ensure the quality of the courses offered by recognized commercial educational institutions and the clarity of their contractual obligations.

Perhaps the most radical legislative change is due in 1991, when the Directorate General for Employment Services of the Ministry for Labour and Social Security is to be hived off under the Employment Services Act. The Act is based on the principle that employment services are the joint responsibility of government, employers and trade unions, and both the national board and the various regional boards comprise representatives of all three. This joint responsibility also extends to training policy.

Other legislative proposals now under consideration are concerned with the structure, quality, planning and coordination of facilities and activities in the area of part-time vocational training (with the exception of such planning as takes place under the Adult Education Framework Act and the Employment Services Act). Part-time vocational training includes courses both for adults and for young people who are no longer required to be in full-time schooling. The proposed legislation encompasses the apprenticeship system, part-time intermediate vocational education and specific training, but not higher vocational education. Part of this field, namely part-time intermediate vocational education and specific training, is covered by the planning arrangements of the administrative structure for employment services, but the apprenticeship system remains outside this planning structure.

Proposals have also been formulated on general and academic secondary-level education for adults. These envisage a twofold purpose for such provision, namely as 'second-chance' education for those who missed out as youngsters and as a bridge to other forms of education and training. Institutional planning for adult secondary education will be in accordance with the procedures laid down for mainstream secondary education, except that institutions will have fixed budgets instead of being funded on an open-ended basis. The planning of activities will be based on the legislation, now in preparation, which is to flesh out the Adult Education Framework Act.

Other new legislation will enable schools and colleges to provide training services (in the framework of their normal activities) to employers and individuals on a contract basis, charging economically realistic fees. Finally, new legislation is also planned for part-time higher education.

The planning and funding system for adult education in The Netherlands, both vocational and non-vocational, is thus due for radical restructuring. Publicly funded provision will in the near future fall into four broad categories:

(i) basic education,
(ii) secondary education (general and academic),
(iii) vocational education in a narrow sense,
(iv) higher education.

Change in the private sector

In the private sector too the recent past has brought rapid change in the field of continuing vocational training, affecting not only its scale and funding, but also the institutional frameworks in which it is provided. These changes have come about partly as a result of the Wagner Committee's proposals (Advisory Committee on the Progress of Industrial Policy, 1983a,b) and the agreements reached in 1982, 1984 and 1986 in the Joint Labour Council, the central consultative forum of the employers' organizations and the trade unions.

Following a sharp decline in interest and activity in the 1970s, reflected in the run-down of company training schemes and some sections of the apprenticeship system, in the 1980s, due, among other things, to technological innovation, changing markets and workforce restructuring, industry has been forced to renew its efforts in this field. In particular there has been an increase in training provision aimed at the permanent core of firms' workforces, but in addition new, often regional, collaborative structures have been set up to promote continuing vocational training, training funds have been established, and in various industries and firms training agreements have been reached in the course of collective bargaining. Some collective agreements have included declarations of intent or commitments regarding the study of training needs. In any event there is a clear tendency to expand and intensify training, with agreements increasingly being reached on general training measures not aimed solely at young people. In some cases agreements have been reached on the conversion of working time into training leave, and there are also schemes involving the use of non-worked shifts for training purposes. In a few industries, agreements have been reached on various types of training course.

Calls within the Joint Labour Council for collective bargainers to focus greater attention on the needs of the long-term unemployed have not produced any clear increase in recent years in the number of collective agreements that include provisions aimed at this target group. Similarly, despite the fact that a Joint Labour Council working group has drawn attention to the difficult position of women returners and ethnic minorities, little if anything has been done to incorporate provisions designed to serve their needs into collective agreements.

Despite the growth of interest in continuing vocational training, the sums involved remain relatively modest in comparison with other European Community States. OECD figures for 1987 show Dutch spending on employee training at 0.36% of the GNP, as against 0.69% in France, 0.78% in the Federal Republic of Germany, 0.85% in the United Kingdom and 0.92% in Belgium; the equivalent figure for Sweden, a non-EC State, was 1.11%. These figures, which have not shifted much in The Netherlands' favour since 1987 (*cf.* Ritzen, 1989), can usefully be borne in mind as we look more closely at some of the central issues in the Dutch debate on continuing vocational training.

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Human resources

There has been widespread recognition over the last 10 years of the ever-growing importance to society of continuing vocational training. This is the result not only of the changes taking place in the social context (unemployment, changing job requirements) and in the kinds of qualifications needed within the workforce, but also of the growing involvement of the two sides of industry and the ensuing influence they have been able to exert in consultative fora at national, regional and sectoral levels. This involvement and influence has in turn entailed consequences for the perspective in which the importance of continuing vocational training is viewed. The now customary arguments — demographic pressures, the need to remedy inadequacies in workers' basic education and to update obsolete knowledge and skills in a world of rapid technical and organizational change, the importance of education and training in social and occupational terms — are increasingly applied in the context of the sentiment that public and private investment in new technologies and new forms of organization represents a waste of social resources unless accompanied by investment in continuing vocational training. Expressed in positive terms, this means that the opportunities offered by automation and information technology can only be exploited to the full if human resources are developed and used effectively (*cf.* Kluytmans, 1989).

Education and training are among the core strategies for the development of this potential. Firms, especially those with a shrinking workforce, therefore need to integrate their product, personnel and training policies. These are principles which are by no means universally applied, however. A further argument is that the introduction of new technologies — at least where investment aimed at widening and deepening capital is concerned — is a long-term matter, requiring different planning rhythms: on the education and training side too, therefore, such investment requires more strategic planning in place of *ad hoc* and short-term responses. This applies not only to industry's own training endeavours but also to the joint activities of government, employers and unions, who have a duty to ensure, among other things, that initial and continuing education and training fit together in terms of content and structure in such a way as to facilitate life-long learning.

Social and economic considerations

In parallel with such thinking in terms of educational investment in human capital, the links between education and training and the labour market are defined in largely social and economic terms. Continuing vocational training has the job of meeting the need for changing skills in a changing environment and thus focuses particularly on the position of the workers, the various internal markets of the firms and the corresponding need on the part of employers for a workforce which can be deployed in accordance with requirements. In this context, the much-used term 'flexibility' is thus concerned more with the flexible, short-term deployment of manpower within the firms than with flexibility between companies and sectors (*cf.* Hövels *et al.*, 1989). Providing (future) workers with the skills for the external labour market is still predominantly seen as the job of initial vocational training.

In this context, considerations relating to the removal of social inequalities on the labour market also stand in a new light. Whereas in the 1970s such considerations were primarily based on objectives such as social justice, today the focus is increasingly on the efficient use of available and potential human capital. This reflects not only demographic trends, the scarcity of labour already affecting certain sectors and the fact (as mentioned above) that industry has in the past neglected or abandoned its training functions; it also reflects the sentiment that more and better efforts are needed in the area of human resource development if technological and organizational change is to proceed smoothly. In the larger organizations at least, in-service training provision is no longer aimed primarily at the higher and middle levels of technical and commercial/administrative occupations. Such endeavours are also aimed in part at improving the employment position of women, ethnic minorities and the disabled: a combination of general (e.g. basic) education and initial and continuing vocational training enables these groups to cope with new technologies, lowers the barriers which prevent their full participation in society and allows them to enter or re-enter employment.

New configurations and scenarios

Among the topics attracting attention in the Dutch debate on continuing vocational training are the changes in educational contexts and challenges with which individuals and groups are confronted. We have already mentioned the greater emphasis now placed on life-long learning and hence on general skills such as 'learning to learn' with which continuing education can equip individuals. What is involved here are not only demographic and labour market factors and the strategic planning of education by employing organizations, which in turn implies career planning. Life-long learning also has a preventive function in respect of early ageing and allows for the growing significance of older people as social actors.

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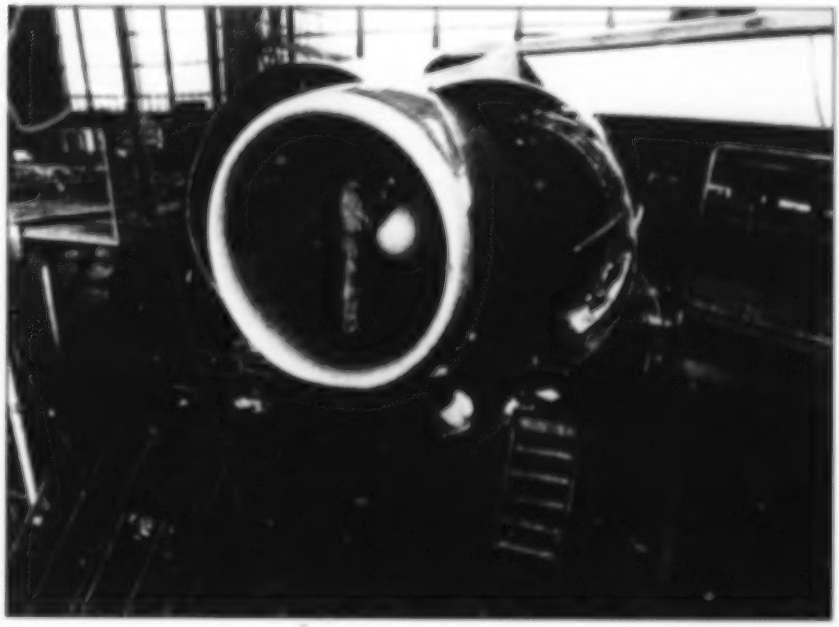
Moreover the configurations and scenarios in which adults learn, for vocational or other purposes, are growing ever more complex. Initial (school- or college-based) training, further and conversion training and training provided by the employer are increasingly interfacing, as are the various actors in the field of vocational training in general. The latter include not only the two sides of industry (to which we shall return later), but also the many types of education and training institutions. There are distinct statutory frameworks and a multiplicity of flexible and modularized learning paths and projects to be found in this context. Flexible time budgets and differentiated labour market orientations also effect a different consumption of education and training. To a large degree this complex environment reflects social reality itself; on the more institutional side, however, it represents to some degree the negative consequence of government policy. Organizational complexity is an adverse factor — notably from the viewpoint of the lesser skilled, who have difficulty finding their way through the maze of schemes and courses on offer — and therefore reinforces existing tendencies in the direction of a segmented labour supply. In this situation it is important not only for the government and employers to offer suitable incentives and appropriate and understandable learning paths, but also for the training market to function at the level of the individual, which means that training provisions should reach the individual consumer so that the latter can find what he or she needs.

In such a complex environment, it is natural that independent and self-directed learning should gain in importance. This implies not only that increasing importance is attached to the amount of time invested by the individual in the learning process, but also that educational investment by the government and industry is complemented by obligations which the individual must meet if optimal results are to be obtained. Educational consumption has thus become more product-oriented and less process-oriented (except for those who are acquainting themselves with the educational field) and, certainly in the case of vocational education, has less to do with individual development and more with a rather more detached familiarization with roles which appear relevant to one's work, personal career and general social utility.

The role of employers and unions in public policy

Changes and innovations in the area of continuing vocational education are not only influenced by considerations relating to successful transactions on internal and external labour markets and the relevant functions of training schemes, either at the level of organizations or individuals. As we have already noted, they are also strongly influenced by the changed role of the government, employers and trade unions and by the change in the processes of negotiation between these parties on the road between education and employment.



Manfred Lieber LAIF

Vocational training in The Netherlands traditionally emphasized school- and college-based learning. Policy on the form and content of vocational training was for a long time — and to some extent still is — determined by the government, primarily the Ministry of Education and Science, and the organizations representing teachers, schools and colleges. The role of the employers and unions thus long remained marginal, except of course in relation to the apprenticeship system and company training schemes, whose role was, however, often only modest. This situation underwent radical change as a result of the slump in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when vocational training as a whole began to be regarded as a key social and economic element in a strategy for national development and the two sides of industry, as the underlying pillars of that strategy, were expressly accorded a major role in decision-making on vocational training.

Under the influence of the Wagner Committee, established by the Dutch Government, which played an important role in airing these ideas, employers' organizations and trade unions have been admitted to important decision-making bodies at national level. The work of such bodies also relates to changes in the structure, funding and design of vocational education as outlined in the first part of this paper, and to that extent we have bidden farewell to the government-dominated centralist planning model. Moreover, steps are being taken to establish sector-based consultative structures involving the government and industry. Accepting the need to gear the provision of training towards the needs of society and industry, the employers and unions involved in these structures have been accorded a major role in the development and formulation of occupational and training profiles and training syllabuses. The view of the relationship between education and employment which still dominates in this connection is one based on more or less exclusive links between training courses, occupations and jobs, in which processes of mutual adjustment play little, if any, part — a view long abandoned in the research field.

A further development since the start of the 1980s has been the tendency of the central employers' and trade union

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organizations to urge those involved in sectoral bargaining to include, in collective agreements, provisions covering employment and training in return for the unions refraining from demanding pay increases or indexation. Not only have such accords helped to increase the number of practical training places within the apprenticeship system (including those for adults), but a growing number of collective agreements have also included provision for updating and conversion courses for workers. The practical effects and results of such agreements are, however, not encouraging.

In the mean time the government has pursued a policy of deregulation in the various sectors of continuing vocational training with a view to enhancing training institutions' financial and management autonomy. The hope is that this will enable training provision to be more flexibly geared to the diverse needs of the labour market. By making the management and operation of employment services a joint responsibility of government and the two sides of industry, it is hoped that the educational element of labour market training for the unemployed and those threatened with unemployment can be better matched to current needs. In this context the principal consequences are to be found at regional level.

The radical changes taking place in the structure and design of initial and continuing vocational training may help it to lose its traditional introverted orientation and its social position as a 'pedagogical province'. If this happens it will make for greater transparency all round, with employers and unions becoming more clearly aware of their responsibility. However, such developments also involve the risk that options regarded as important by the various parties concerned will be realized in an unbalanced fashion. Hövels (1990) points out that in a social situation in which there is little if any tradition of anchoring the qualification component in the labour relations system, there is a danger of an unbalanced distribution of influence between the two sides of industry, with possible adverse implications notably for the trade unions. Through a lack of tradition, but also because the new developments have affected mainly administrative and bureaucratic tasks, the qualifications debate has not got properly under way within the trade union movement, which is therefore unable to exert sufficient influence on these developments. Moreover, central government, which traditionally offered some counterweight to the power of the employers, is seeking to reduce the scope of its own influence and is unclear as to its own share in the social division of responsibility.

The government's declining administrative and financial involvement

No intensive discussion is taking place in The Netherlands on the content of future qualifications. There appears to be agreement on this issue, where the tendency exists to delegate the matter to the two sides of industry or the educational institutions. The debate is mainly concerned with the division of responsibility and related questions. Major reports often constitute the occasion for more intensive discussions.

The government's current reflections on its own role in education policy mainly relate to its management philosophy. Recognizing the deficiencies of its management capacity in a number of respects, the government has begun a more selective form of organization and has transferred management responsibilities to other levels. Against a background of increasingly diverse educational needs and with a view to ensuring a high-quality educational product with a high return, the government sets much store by 'autonomous' educational institutions, and this also applies to the field of continuing vocational training. Such institutions are intended to have a certain degree of scope in policy matters, so that they can make choices in areas such as the use of available financial resources, staffing and establishment policy, career development and in-service training, cooperation and/or competition with other institutions, curricula and timetables. This again assumes the creation of expert management.

From the employer's side — and employers tend to see education as a weapon in the context of international competition — there are calls for continuing vocational training institutions to be taken over by industry. This could have a positive impact on the range of training provisions, the rental of buildings and machinery, the granting and lending of equipment and contract activities, whereby corresponding institutions would run firms' training courses. Employers believe that it should be compulsory for teachers to participate in a placement in industry, e.g. at intervals of 10 years; conversely, industry could provide the corresponding institutions with the teaching staff. In-company training courses and the courses provided by educational institutions should be coordinated from the planning stage onwards. To this end the institutions need greater scope to develop initiatives in cooperation with industry to draw greater benefit from such activities than is possible in the traditional system.

The most far-reaching proposals so far were put forward by the Rauwenhoff Committee (Temporary Advisory Committee on Education and the Labour Market) in the report entitled 'Education and the labour market: heading towards an effective path', it submitted to the Minister for Education and Science in mid-1990. One theme of the report is the committee's belief that the various par-

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ties — individuals, colleges, firms, government — involved in initial and continuing vocational training have been prevented from improving the links between education and the labour market by red tape, the weight of the various interest groups and the fact that education is concentrated on the younger generation. It is only if these obstacles are removed and replaced by creative and binding relations of joint sponsorship between individuals and colleges, firms and colleges and colleges and the government that there can be any prospect of achieving the necessary flexibility. Another theme is that of life-long learning and the need for its incorporation into an education system in which the various segments are intercoordinated and individuals have a life-long entitlement to acquire the minimum qualifications necessary for access to the labour market. The report's proposals on funding are also geared to this objective: following initial education, every individual would have a period of five years in which to acquire his or her initial labour market qualification with the help of public funding, and any unexpired portion of that period could be used later on. Finally, the report urges a radical dualization of the education and training system in the last phase of vocational and university education, with a view to ensuring an adequate balance of supply and demand on the labour market; this would be one of the organizational forms of the relations of joint sponsorship, mentioned above.

The Rauwenhoff Committee's unorthodox ideas and recommendations have a strongly administrative bias and seem designed notably to strengthen employers' and industry's grip on vocational training (the committee did not include trade union representatives). Their proposals also appear to anticipate frictions on the labour market, namely the coexistence on the supply side of qualitative and quantitative shortfalls, with a hard core of long-term unemployment and a hidden reserve of labour among the recipients of disability benefits and women. This is also evident in the way in which the problem of imbalances in labour supply and demand is defined: in the committee's view, the issue is chiefly one of meeting the demand for the workers and skills needed in the context of technological and organizational change. Questions of absorption, utilization and distribution are scarcely addressed in the report, apart from the viewpoint of the individual consumer of education and training. The idea of dual learning routes, however interesting, will not be easy to put into practice, since the availability of training places in industry greatly varies depending on the state of the economy, and notably on the prospective demand for labour. Finally, the committee adopts no stance on the regulation of training leave in collective agreements, which might have offered a way of translating the entitlement to life-long learning following ir. ,ial training into mutually binding arrangements covering employers and employees *(cf.* Leijnse, 1990). Elements of general education, which are of growing importance in the context of continuing vocational training, could have been touched upon in this context.

Conclusion

The debate in progress in The Netherlands on continuing vocational training is currently mainly concerned with its administrative, organizational and financial aspects. A measure of creativity has been shown which will no doubt have its impact in the not too distant future on the structure of educational institutions and on educational funding. A new kind of institutional division will probably develop in the field of education and the labour market, in which the dominant parties will exercise control. Issues of educational renewal tend to remain in the background. The pragmatic nature of the discussion is reflected in a somewhat one-sided interpretation of the essentially complex relations between education, work and the labour market, in which the focus is on the qualifications needed by workers to adjust to changing circumstances. It is thus hardly surprising that our assessment of the ways in which initial and continuing vocational training can anticipate technological and organizational changes lags behind that of other Western European countries.

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Vocational training redefines its limits

Over the past 15 years there has been a radical change in vocational training. We shall try to take stock of some of these developments, considering some of the present-day challenges and possible patterns of change.

Two striking developments are well known: on the one hand, it is the perceived role of vocational training that it should contribute towards making our economies more competitive and innovatory, while, on the other, it is used as a means of reducing unemployment, especially through youth employment programmes and schemes to combat long-term unemployment.

In other words, vocational training has become one of the forms of economic action available to the parties involved — the State, employers and trade organizations. Vocational training is now part of the economy, but has it moved too far away from its social and cultural role? Does it and should it not amount to more than fitting a person to a job, creating a more rational and more productive *homo economicus*? Should vocational training be regarded as no more than a sector of economic activity providing training, on a par with other industrial sectors?

Before trying to answer this question, we should take a more detailed look at current developments in vocational training. A closer investigation in fact shows that our traditional reference points have vanished. The comparisons used as a basis for our arguments 15 years ago are no longer as reliable as they were for interpreting the realities of the present day.

Whether one looks at the role of the social partners in vocational training or the organization and content of training, the greater economic significance of developments have upset the previous balance between the role of the various partners in vocational training and education. What then are the role and responsibility of the State: does it decide, does it negotiate, does it let things happen, does it anticipate?

Jørgen Bindrim/ILO

training has transformed our perceptions. Let us try to illustrate some of the ways in which frontiers have shifted in the field of vocational training.

The role of the State and employers

Employers adapt people to jobs, the State provides for their social advancement and formulates policies to combat unemployment; the employer is responsible for organizing short training courses, the State for longer-term schemes offering qualifications to the less skilled.

This sharp contrast is not only undesirable but does not even correspond to observed realities. Economic and social

Does the employer have only short-term concerns and demands to make of the educational system? Can this job-related concern be contrasted with a technological and educational concern that only the State would be able to promote?

The workplace is changing

Organizational changes in the workplace and in job skills are forcing employers to look for, or to develop, a pattern of vocational training aimed at more than mere job adaptation. The emphasis on skills, so common today, shows the extent to which people are needed. It also shows the extent to which work has changed. For example, a skilled mechanical engineering technician was once expected to know about processes and com-

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ponents and to have expertise in a specific field. Now that most plants are automated, this knowledge and expertise have been partly taken over by machines; what is expected of the worker is having the ability of troubleshooting, carrying out maintenance work, arriving at a 'quality' diagnosis, etc. An employee must, therefore, offer a range of skills; he must have not only a technical qualification in the traditional sense, but also a quality appraisal capability, maintenance skills and the capacity to communicate with other installations.

When we look at the development of job skills, we also see the changes that have been occurring in business and industry, underlying the changing pattern of qualifications, i.e. different contractual terms, new operating methods and new ways of organizing production units. For example, reducing the number of rungs on the hierarchical ladder has widespread effects on the whole range of qualifications. Closer links between commercial and manufacturing functions, between design office and workshop, between maintenance and production, have repercussions on the entire system and hence on questions of job skills. Increasingly, the emphasis is on how the individual plans his own work. Apart from the development in individual technical skills — which is what employers are looking for — there is also a set of qualities which, paradoxically, do not necessarily depend on initial or continuing training: autonomy, flexibility, interpersonal skills, an ability to work as a team, etc.

This changing pattern of qualifications is forcing firms to cease regarding initial or continuing vocational training as merely being geared to a particular job and to see it as having much broader aims and as contributing to personal development and the level of basic skills. The ability to take the longer-term view is not the sole preserve of the State — a process in which it is not always successful — nor is it always absent from firms or trade organizations. For the employer, however, it may depend on the technical fields involved. There are those in which the investment concept predominates, including investment in job training, and others where short-term effectiveness is the prime concern. It also depends on the type of firm. Some look ahead and seek to foster good relations with their environment in order to be adaptable. To a large extent, the ability of large companies to look ahead would seem to run counter to the short-term concerns of small firms.

One of the challenges currently facing vocational training, however, is to devise training systems and training incentives which can stimulate the demand for more sophisticated vocational training within firms.

Paul Lowe/NETWORK

The State

For their part, employers are no longer systematically seeking to match training to jobs, nor is State intervention in the field of initial and continuing training confined to categories excluded from the job market and the less skilled. The past 15 years have seen a strengthening of the State's role of giving the economy the qualifications it requires, in addition to its traditional role of providing basic training and education. In the case of France, this change has been particularly marked in the initial stages of higher education and among public-sector providers of continuing training, which have sought to adapt to the needs of the economy.

Thus, the relationships between training and employment have undergone profound change. The French situation, for example, reveals a far greater level of interpenetration by the action of the State, employers and trade bodies than in the past. One stage in this interpenetration has been the development of alternate training, both in the schools and at the continuing training stage, as well as the joint State/employers management of specific initial or continuing training schemes.

Clearly, the State cannot abandon its role of compensating for inequality of access to continuing training, but it also has the role of helping to maintain a balance in continuing training between the evolution of basic qualifications for employees and the changing pattern of employment as a result of joint action and partnership among the various parties concerned, namely the employees, employers, trade associations, unions and the local communities.

Work and training

The distinctions that used to be made — 'there is a time for training and a time for work; there is the workshop and then there is the classroom' — are no longer valid. Vocational training needs the stimulus of the workplace to improve, and work must be organized in such a way as to leave scope for training.

The dividing line between those aspects of qualification dictated by technological development and the need for new skills, on the one hand, and behavioural matters, on the other, has not always been fully analysed. It is not obvious that training is the universal panacea. Take negotiation, for example: can the ability to form personal relationships really be taught? Are optimum manufacturing methods always something that can be passed on by instruction?

Do organizations have a role in facilitating and promoting this kind of apprenticeship in order to ensure that train-

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ing schemes are fully efficient? Apart from the training provided by the education system, the changes taking place within organizations have an important bearing on building up the skills that are needed today. There are some organizations that bring out the qualities of intelligence and creativity, others where the level of skills imparted are rather less satisfactory, but it is not just a question of how training is used. For example, some organizations do not always know how to introduce a young person properly into a firm: not enough thought is given to the subject, and there is a lack of organization and guidance for providing opportunities for internal mobility. Here there is need to change management and organization methods.

At the same time, there has to be a new interaction between training and work: if it is linked to work, training will help in the acquisition of new skills through new approaches offering something more than gimmicks, such as a three-day modular course on human relationships. Once a person is in a job, some of the training requirements can be directly related to the problems encountered in the course of that job.

The key objective for the development of continuing education is to transform experience into knowledge and to make knowledge an instrument in the service of experience. The changing pattern of training provision and the organization of alternation between training and work are vital in this respect, over and above what is done in terms of traineeships. It presupposes the development of productive organizations where training is clearly a component of the work. Conversely, continuing training is not confined to the classroom, but should be organized in response to the specific needs in the workplace and of job-related activities. Training time could just as easily be taken from the working day as from leisure time if training is to make an effective contribution to the creation of far broader, more transferable job skills.

Education and training

The final contrast we should like to examine is between education and vocational training. Confined to the area of initial training, education apparently seeks to achieve a combination of social, cultural and personal objectives, whereas training aims to prepare or adapt people for a particular job. It is said that the former develops the ability to adapt, whereas the latter simply adapts. The role of the former should be to ensure equality of opportunity and contribute to social cohesion, whereas the latter should have a purely economic role, namely to produce the requisite job skills.

This contrast has lost something of its relevance. Firstly, education as a provider of initial training is far from attaining all its objectives. It helps to exclude people and does not always ensure equality of opportunity. The criteria of academic success are restrictive and there is an inability to develop all kinds of potential. What is needed, therefore, is a diversification of the paths to success, mainly through initial or continuing training. Even though universal school education is, and will remain, the major achievement of this century, today its limitations by comparison with the original ambitions are revealed.

The issues today, then, are the educational aims of vocational training and the job-related aims of education.

Two ways forward

The first solution, within the framework of continuing training, is to provide access to education and hence to longer periods of academic study. Admittedly, there are problems of cost and lifestyle, and this solution is very limited in the face of such major needs. The number of people who might return to all or part of their inital education is substantial, and there must be an effort of imagination. In terms of time, cost and training methods, new solutions can be found. The prerequisite is to set aside *a priori* considerations and to draw on the joint financial efforts of the State, the adults being educated and employers, taking advantage of the fact that the dividing lines between the State and employers, between work and training, and between education and training are becoming increasingly blurred. A shorter working week and economic growth may have a beneficial spin-off for training. Mixed training arrangements covering both working and leisure time could be found, especially by recourse to alternate schemes.

The second solution is that academic teaching opens out far more to the economic and working world. Education is not just a process of intellectual, cultural and civic learning based on a number of disciplines; it can also draw on job-related learning. On the other hand, vocational training may have an educational objective if it is not confined to narrow technical learning but is set the task of imparting a mastery of areas of vocational expertise and seeks to promote a critical and innovatory spirit.

A fresh relationship between initial and continuing training is needed. Neither can continue to function in entirely separate worlds, one of them a regulated system (initial training), the other a free market-driven system (continuing training), often operating on a small scale.

There is much evidence to suggest that the dividing lines in the field of training are becoming blurred. Yet this is only a trend, and it cannot be consolidated unless we find new methods of funding, organizing and deciding on the content of training. The effectiveness of the campaign against the exclusion from education and training of a substantial proportion of the population, something that has probably become more marked in recent years as a result of greater competition and competitiveness, depends on such solutions being found. Even if it is recognized that specific measures to combat exclusion are and will be necessary, it is the duty of the training providers to make those measures superfluous.

Training is not simply a right, but a vital need, not just for the economy, but for society as well. That is why fresh compromises have to be found between the social, economic and personal dimensions of training and education. Only through the participation of the various parties involved in this quest can the lasting nature of these new solutions be guaranteed.

The analysis of cost and financing structures in continuing training

A model for the European comparison

For some years, CEDEFOP has been trying to add analyses of costs and financing in continuing training to the studies on the financing of initial training that have been organized and coordinated by the Centre.

Most Member States of the Community have now submitted national monographs, containing a wealth of detailed information but permitting no more than a rudimentary international analysis. This is an unsatisfactory situation when it is recalled that the technical and economic restructuring likely to accompany European integration will change the qualifications required of workers and that the new skills will principally have to be learnt in the context of continuing training, since over 80% of workers who shall be in employment in the year 2000 have already completed their initial training today.

The Council of the European Communities takes a cautious view of continuing training in the Member States. In the guidelines to its decision establishing an action programme for the development of continuing vocational training[1] there is no reference to the harmonization of continuing training: its goals are an improvement in the 'convergence of initiatives by the Member States' in the area of continuing training and 'greater convergence between the objectives of vocational training and employment'. Yet even if these goals are to be achieved, the organizational, cost and financing structures of continuing training must be made transparent. The brief description of continuing training in a CEDEFOP publication[2] makes the problem explicit: 'The continuing training "system" is not in fact a system: it is a mixture of market-oriented elements and uncoordinated isolated training actions.'

The following article presents approaches to the description and analysis of continuing training, going beyond the above, still very imprecise outline. The conceptual approaches will also be explained and illustrated against the background of the structures of German continuing training.

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Common structural features of continuing training in Europe

Unlike initial training, continuing training is not a single, closed system in any Community country. This does not mean that comparative description and analysis is impossible. If the structures of continuing training are compared with those of initial training, the opposite conclusion is more likely to be drawn.

Although the overlapping of the various segments of continuing training and the complexity of the financing structures make it more difficult to develop appropriate analytical models, the differences in the structures of continuing training in the various Member States are less pronounced than they are in initial training.

Historically, continuing training is the youngest branch of the education system. It is therefore far less integrated into that system than e.g. initial training. Its 'systems elements' are closely linked to initial training; continuing training complements, compensates for and preserves initial training.

In reality, there is an overlap of three segments, each structured and organized to satisfy different requirements:

- publicly funded continuing training,
- in-company continuing training, and
- individual continuing training.

Two aspects are vital in any study of the different structures of continuing training:

- An analysis of the motives of the various parties involved in continuing training and of the decision-making processes that form the basis for the conversion of these motives into practical training measures.

- An analysis of the flows of funds in continuing training, from the initial source to the financing of the individual training measure or individual participant.

In the following, a concept for the analysis of flows of funds and decision-making processes is presented for discussion and illustrated against the background of the structures of German continuing training.

Continuing training in the various Member States differs primarily because

their initial training systems differ. This is true in two respects: firstly, initial training, or the initial introduction of young people to the world of work, forms an organizational part of continuing training in some countries (e.g. the *apprêtissage* in France); secondly depending on the results achieved in initial training at macro-level in one country, individuals, firms and public bodies may be forced to arrange for compensatory continuing training in areas which form part of initial training in other countries.

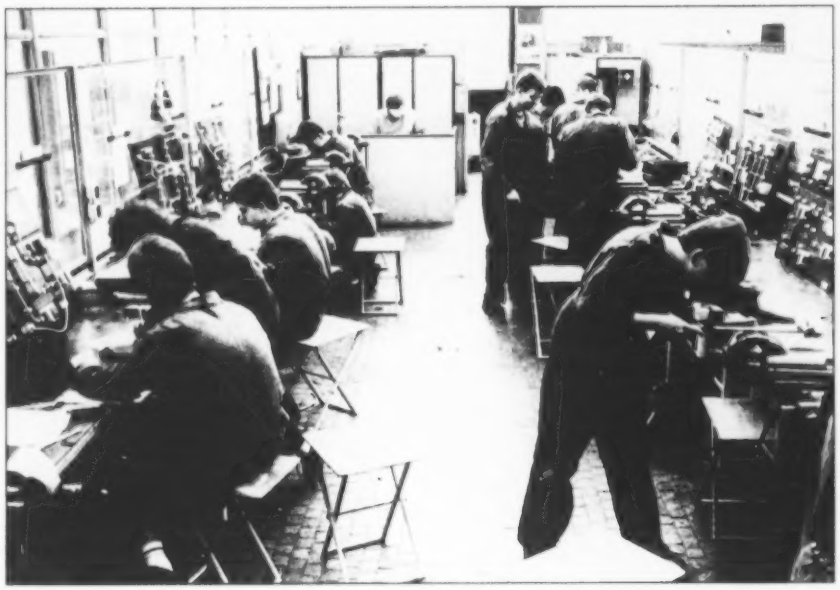
In qualitative terms too, the skills learnt in initial training have implications for decisions concerning the areas on which continuing training should focus. National vocational training systems in which on-the-job training plays a prominent part, as in the dual system in the Federal Republic of Germany, relieve continuing training bodies of much of the task of preparing young people for entry into the world of work.

If it proceeds analytically from the structural implications of the different initial training systems in the Member States, an international comparison based on the complex financing structures and on the motives of the various parties involved in continuing training will not be a futile exercise.

A concept for the description and analysis of continuing training for the European comparison

Continuing training is expected to be highly flexible in terms of content, duration, intensity, the period over which the skills learnt remain useful, specificity, target groups, admission requirements and satisfaction of labour market needs. Funding structures in continuing training are also flexible. Besides funding by the individual and the firm arranging the continuing training, many permutations, some including public funds, are possible. Financing may begin with the participant, with the training measure or, a level higher, with the training institute. Financing arrangements may also involve individuals or firms in the funding of continuing training measures, even though they themselves do not derive any direct benefit from such measures.

A systematic international comparison of the complex financing structures seems appropriate and necessary because the actual form of a financing arrangement is likely to have a significant bearing on the content of continuing training and thus on the achievement of the goals of specific continuing training measures.



Manfred VOLLMER

For an international comparison, a distinction should therefore be made between the following analytical levels.

Participants

Participants in a continuing training measure form the lowest analytical level. They form the target of continuing training. Only they will ultimately reveal whether the predetermined objectives of a continuing training course (adjustment to technical changes, reintegration into the labour market, attaining a higher level of qualification, etc.) have been achieved. The question as to whether a given type of continuing training has been appropriate for its intended target group can similarly be answered only by reference to the participants. Similarly, the cost of continuing training measures to the individual and the scale of any offsets can be determined only at this level.

Measures

This level mainly concerns the content of continuing training. Analyses will give some insight into the structure of continuing training and reveal focal areas in the various segments. Qualitative aspects such as the duration of measures, the type of instruction, places and methods of learning and forms of certification can be analysed at this level.

Training establishments

The training establishment is the place at which a continuing training measure takes place or where its content and organization are decided. It may be publicly owned or belong to a private firm, or it may be an independent commercial body offering training courses in the market place.

The training establishment is the level at which an institutionally oriented analysis can be made of the cost of continuing training measures, since it is here that all direct costs are incurred and, in many cases, entered in the accounts. It must be recalled, however, that, while the courses listed in directories are not necessarily identical with those actually implemented, analyses are often based on an evaluation of such documents.

Initial and final sources of funds

Given the complex financing structures in continuing training, if the flow of funds is to be appropriately investigated even where mixed financing systems are used, a distinction should be made between the initial and final sources of funds.

■ The initial source is the body which arranges for a continuing training measure by providing funds. A general distinction can be made between three initial sources: firms, private households and public bodies.

■ The funds needed to finance continuing training merge at the level of the final source. Except in the case of mixed financing systems, which are, however, very important in a number of the Community's Member States, the initial and final funding levels are identical (e.g. when an

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industrial firm arranges updating training courses in its own training establishment). Nevertheless, it is wise to make a distinction for the purposes of analysis, so that the decision-making processes which ultimately shape the education policy environment for a continuing training concept may be taken into account.

It must be assumed that in the case of mixed financing systems the initial sources of funds form part of complex decision-making structures which restrict their creative influence significantly.

Offsetting costs

Besides the two levels of financing, another aspect must be considered in this context. All initial sources of funds (public bodies, firms and private households) have specific means, under a wide range of statutory and other schemes, of reducing their expenditure on continuing training measures. These schemes may have a major influence on the attitude of those concerned towards continuing training, often in a way that was not intended by their originators.

Private households, for example, deduct the cost of continuing training from their tax bills as professional or special expenses. This form of deduction excludes certain groups (e.g. the unemployed and non-working women) from co-financing by the state. The scale on which costs can be deducted is, moreover, income-related. The higher the income, the higher the deduction. In principle, public bodies have little influence on this deduction of costs. Nor is anything known about the scale and breakdown of the amounts among social groups.

Gernot Huber/LAIF

The structure of the segments of continuing training in the Federal Republic of Germany

The structural environment in which the continuing training 'system' has evolved is characterized by the following:

(i) a pluralism of suppliers and

(ii) a continuing training market;

(iii) a fragmentation of the statutory foundations and

(iv) the subsidiary role of the State.

Pluralism of suppliers

A wide variety of training bodies and their establishments act as suppliers to the continuing training market. Apart from public bodies (State and local authorities), most are large social groups or associations (e.g. trade unions, employers, Churches), firms and commercial suppliers.

Continuing training market

The continuing training market is characterized by numerous restrictions and distortions due, for example, to the subsidization of training bodies, confusion over what is available and the formation of monopolies. The commercial nature of continuing training varies from one segment to another. A functioning market can be said to exist primarily in the case of continuing training financed by private households. The suppliers include a wide range of training bodies offering courses that differ in price and content. Distortions arise, however, in regional terms and through the use of public funds to subsidize training bodies.

The market is also subject to restrictions on the demand side. Most would-be clients, for example, lack a clear insight into what is available, in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Fragmentation of the statutory foundation

The historical evolution of the various segments of continuing training is reflected in the fragmentation of their statutory foundations. The Federal Government is responsible for non-school continuing training (e.g. in firms), while die *Länder* are responsible for continuing vocational training in schools and for non-vocational, i.e. general and political, continuing education. Statutory arrangements exist side by side

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and unrelated at both Federal and *Land* level: at Federal level the Vocational Training Act lays down the foundations for the long-term organization and structuring of continuing training with the help of provisions on further training (examinations); the Employment Promotion Act uses continuing training as an instrument of active labour market policy; the Distance Study (Protection) Act is intended to protect consumers who conclude private contracts with distance study institutes.

The Education Acts of the *Länder* govern continuing training to technician level, for example. The Continuing Training Acts of the *Länder* are mainly concerned with the promotion of institutes which provide general or political continuing education, but also offer continuing vocational training (e.g. language courses at adult education centres leading to the award of certificates that can be used professionally). The Educational Leave Acts include provisions that entitle employees to leave to attend courses of continuing vocational training and political education.

The subsidiary role of the State

The heterogeneity of the abovementioned statutory arrangements, which have emerged to deal with problem situations that could not have been resolved without government assistance, exemplifies the subsidiary role of the State. The State intervenes only when the individuals and social groups concerned cannot cope with the tasks they face.

The figure on page 30 shows the structure of continuing vocational training in the Federal Republic as it has evolved in the field of tension consisting of the market, public responsibility and government regulations. The segments are:

Individual continuing training: The clients are for the most part individuals who use the services of training bodies in the continuing training market and finance their participation themselves — deducting the costs where they can — regardless of their position in the institutional set-up (e.g. as employees of a firm).

In-company continuing training: In this segment it is the firms that want the qualifications; they are also suppliers of continuing training for their own employees, either developing the courses themselves, or buying them on the continuing training market if their own infrastructure is inadequate.

Continuing training assisted under the Employment Promotion Act:[3] The actors and clients in this segment are the Federal Institute for Labour and its regional offices, which assist individuals financially under the Employment Promotion Act (AFG) und also largely determine the content of courses for the target groups of the labour market policy, especially the unemployed. This service is funded from contributions paid by employers and employees, any budget deficits of the Federal Institute for Labour being made good by the State.

Clear dividing lines cannot be drawn between the various segments of continuing training, particularly in financing terms. They overlap to varying degrees. Individual continuing training may, for example, be assisted by the State (Field A), continuing training measures in firms may be assisted under the AFG (Field B), and individual continuing training in the firm's interests may be assisted by the employer (Field C) and also subsidized by the State (Field D).

Individual continued training

Aims, target groups and measures

No specific quantitative data on this segment are available. Some indication of aims, target groups and measures can be obtained by interpreting results of representative surveys of the overall continuing training sector (especially the Report on Attitudes towards Continuing Training 1988) and statistics relating to specific aspects of this segment, such as distance study, which must generally be considered a form of individual continuing training, and the type of continuing training assisted under the AFG (Field A), that is mainly concerned with assisting employees undergoing updating training.

Participants in individual continuing training are primarily interested in updating training and courses of adjustment training and retraining that lead to the award of certificates. Most are employed people who are educationally motivated and achievement-oriented. They attend courses on their own initiative and usually at their own expense and are principally interested in updating training as a means of achieving professional advancement. They regard continuing training as an investment in their own future, which will pay for itself through promotion or other rewards. Most of the courses are therefore likely to be medium- to long-term and to lead to the award of recognized certificates.

Participants in distance studies form a typical group in that they normally undergo continuing training while in employment, on their own initiative and at their own expense. More than half prefer courses in commercial practice (with certificates), courses in which school certificates can be obtained, and courses in business management and technical subjects leading to the award of appropriate certificates.[4]

Costs and financing

There are as yet no empirically backed data on the scale of the costs incurred by participants in this segment of continuing training. According to the findings of

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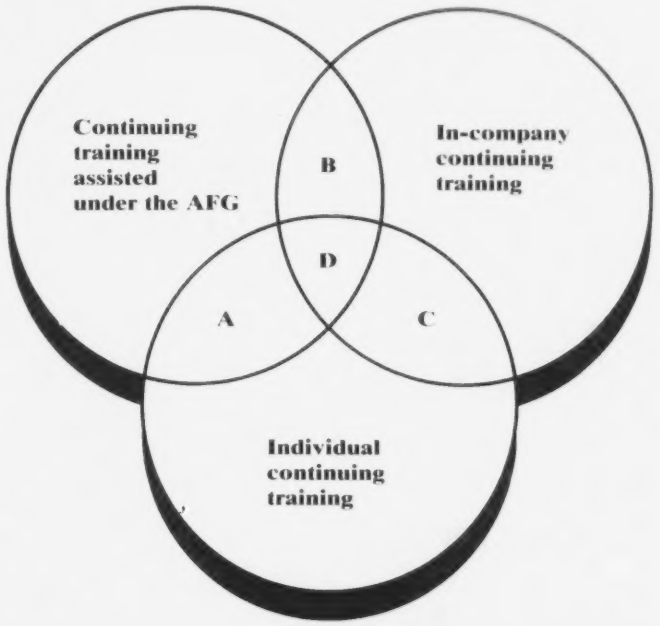
Figure: Continuing training segments and how they overlap



The Report on Attitudes towards Continuing Training 1988, only a third of the participants interviewed incurred costs.[5] Estimates of costs incurred by individual participants in continuing training have produced very different results: the Institute of German Industry puts expenses incurred by participants in continuing training in 1988 at DM 2.5 billion.[6] The internal estimates of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training are far higher: DM 18 billion for individual continuing training.[7] In empirical surveys of the costs incurred by participants in continuing training the opportunities they have to offset these costs — under the AFG, through the firm or through the State (tax deductions), for example — must be taken into account.

In-company continuing training

Aims, target groups and measures

Measures in this segment consist largely of adjustment training, with the emphasis on data processing, marketing, business management, technology and staff management.[8] Although courses concerning behaviour and values (interdisciplinary subjects) are gaining in importance, they are still of secondary importance in most firms.

The target groups include far more employees above skilled worker level (managers 13.8%; technical white-collar workers 39.7%; commercial staff 30.5%) than skilled workers (11.9%) and unskilled and semi-skilled workers (4.1%).[9]

Most of the courses are of short duration (up to a week); just under a third of in-company continuing training consists of on-the-job learning.[10] A large proportion of such training (in the crafts, for example) is provided by the manufacturers of equipment; as a rule, certificates are not awarded after such courses.

Costs and financing

Continuing training in the private sector cost DM 26.2 billion in 1987, with courses accounting for some DM 9.9 billion (44%), on-the-job learning for DM 8.1 billion (24%), information meetings for DM 3.4 billion (13%), the cost of continuing training staff for about DM 2.4 billion (9%) and other costs for DM 2.5 billion (10%).[11] To this must be added the cost of continuing training for employees in the public service, agriculture, the liberal professions and non-profit organizations. No more than rough estimates of these costs are available at present; the Institute of German Industry puts them at DM 12.2 billion (1988) for the whole sector, while the Federal Institute for Vocational Training estimates the cost of continuing training for public servants alone at DM 10 billion (1989).[12]

As a rule, the cost of continuing training arranged by firms includes the continued payment of wages and salaries and release from other work where training is not on the job. In some cases, advantage can be taken of facilities based on company agreements or arrangements under collective agreements.

Continuing training assisted under the AFG (Employment Promotion Act)

Aims, target groups and measures

Three-fifths of measures assisted under the AFG concern adjustment training, about a fifth updating training, the remainder retraining and job familiarization. Within the extremely wide range of subjects, in which it is virtually impossible to recognize focal areas, new technologies account for around a quarter of instruction time.[13]

Continuing training assisted under the AFG is intended primarily for the problem groups in the labour market, and especially the unemployed. In 1986 two-thirds of participants were unemployed before attending courses (in 1989 about three-fifths).

Most measures last between four and 12 months. The majority of courses end without a recognized certificate being awarded. Full-time measures generally dominate.

Costs and financing

In 1988 the Federal Institute for Labour spent some DM 6 billion on continuing training (further training, retraining, job familiarization) and a further DM 2.1 billion on language courses for ethnic German immigrants. Maintenance allowances and training expenses accounted for half of the expenditure in each case.

The funds are raised from contributions paid by employees and employers in equal proportion. The State covers any budget deficits of the Federal Institute for Labour. The assistance provided comprises maintenance allowances and training expenses (e.g. participants' fees, travel expenses, learning aids). The scale of assistance differs depending on

whether training is regarded as 'necessary' (especially for the unemployed) or 'advisable' (especially upgrading training for employees) in labour market terms. Maintenance allowances are usually based on participants last net income (currently 65%, for participants with families 73%) and are not repayable where assistance is deemed 'necessary'; training expenses are refunded in full. In the case of 'advisable' assistance, where the continuing training of employees has priority, maintenance allowances are granted as loans. Lump sums per participant-hour are paid towards training expenses.

Summary and prospects

This article has sought to present for discussion a methodological approach to the international comparative analysis of continuing vocational training systems. The description of the structure of continuing training in Germany is also intended to encourage experts in other European countries to describe their overall system or comparable segments along similar lines.

Other expectations are associated with these aims:

■ Improvement of analytical instruments
The categories and criteria for comparative descriptions and analyses outlined above must be tested and examined for viability. It is hoped that the debate on the methodology underlying this approach will produce an improved set of instruments.

■ Promotion of the formation of a system
Describing continuing training with the aid of the categories mentioned improves the prospect of the segmented parts of continuing training being perceived as a single entity and shaped accordingly. The segments can be linked with a view to achieving common goals (e.g. increasing participation in continuing training) and developed into a system; this will not only provide guidance for everyone involved in continuing training but will also and in particular facilitate action by the 'participants in the market'.

■ Improvement of the data situation
Appropriate information and data are needed if continuing training is to be described and analysed. The example of German continuing training reveals gaps in the available data, but also indicates how they can be filled; the description shows what information and data are needed. In general, an improvement in the data situation will help to pave the way for effective, goal-oriented action by those involved in continuing training.

For the identification and description of continuing training structures — especially when cost and financing structures are taken into account — four aspects, which also form the basis of this article, are of prime importance.

(1) The interests of the various parties involved in continuing training differ. The segments create organizational and structural conditions that make it easier for the various parties to achieve their respective aims.

(2) Continuing training is related to initial training. The closeness of this relationship and the extent to which continuing training is integrated into the education system are determined by national concepts of education. Even where fresh approaches to linking the two are being adopted, continuing training reacts to the overall structure of initial training or to its shortcomings.

(3) The funds provided determine the scale and structure of continuing vocational training. The partial overlapping of the interests of the various parties involved in training has given rise to complex mixed financing systems in many countries.

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Alternative financing arrangements are often suitable for a given training objective and the action taken to achieve it.

(4) A comparative analysis should, in our opinion, begin with the segmentation of continuing vocational training after the main initial source of funds. This ideal type of breakdown will enable the structural environment to be identified and the overlapping of the segments to be appropriately explained.

Past monographs on the cost and financing of continuing training have produced many interesting findings. With the help of the approach presented here the now separate sets of information and data could be merged and a contribution made to an 'overall view' of continuing training. We hope structural analyses that make it easier for 'foreigners' to understand the system will emerge in the future with the aid of the common analytical model and description concepts.

Notes

1 Council Decision of 29 May 1990 establishing an action programme for the development of continuing vocational training in the European Community (Force). L 156, 1990.

2 CEDEFOP (ed.). 'Education and training in Europe'. *CEDEFOP Flash Special*, 1/90, p. 7.

3 The public authorities (Federal, *Land* and local government) do not form a separate continuing vocational training segment. Although they spent about DM 3 billion on continuing training in 1988, these funds were, with very few exceptions, devoted to general and political continuing education. Expenditure on employees in the public service and state-owned enterprises forms part of the 'in-company continuing training' segment.

4 Federal Ministry of Education and Science (ed). Berufsbildungsbericht 1989, *Grundlagen und Perspektiven für Bildung und Wissenschaft*, 24, Bonn 1989, p. 147 *et seq.*

5 Infratest Sozialforschung/Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforschung. *Berichtssystem Weiterbildungsverhalten 1988. Entwurffassung des integrierten Gesamtberichts*, Munich/Hanover, April 1990, p. 188.

6 Weiss, R. 'Strukturen der Weiterbildungsfinanzierung'. *Streitsache: Finanzierung der Weiterbildung*. Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft (ed.), Cologne, 1990, p. 24.

7 Schmidt, H. 'Probleme der Berufsbildungsfinanzierung und Lösungsansätze'. *Streitsache: Finanzierung der Weiterbildung*. Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft (ed.), op. cit., p. 95 *et seq.*

8 Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft. Projekt: Kosten und Strukturen betrieblicher Weiterbildung. Kurzfassung der Ergebnisse (Mimeographed MS), Cologne, 1988, p. 18.

9 Bardeleben, R. von, *et al.*, 'Strukturen betrieblicher Weiterbildung. Ergebnisse einer empirischen Kostenuntersuchung'. *Berichte zur beruflichen Bildung*, No 83, BIBB, Berlin and Bonn, 1986, p. 62.

10 Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft. Projekt: Kosten und Strukturen betrieblicher Weiterbildung, op. cit., p. 21.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 48.

12 Schmidt, H. 'Probleme der Berufsbildungsfinanzierung und Lösungsansätze', *Streitsache: Finanzierung der Weiterbildung*. Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft (ed.), Cologne, 1990, p. 93.

13 Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforschung. Bestandsaufnahme der beruflichen Weiterbildung in Niedersachsen 1986 (Mimeographed MS), Hanover, 1987, p. 2.

CEDEFOP

Continuing training in an open learning centre — An example that could be transferred to another culture?

On 1 August 1989, on the 23rd floor of an office tower block in the heart of Brussels a new centre was opened: Forespace, a prototype centre for self-directed training, launched by Forem, the new Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi (vocational training and employment board at language, community and regional level).

Forespace is a prototype in that it provides 100 training workstations, based solely on self-directed methods. The training it offers makes use of audiovisual technology and computer-aided teaching, in some cases combined with a videodisk. The workstations are in a landscaped office space where 100 'pupils', working side by side, have access to courses on a whole variety of subjects such as languages, business administration and management, office technology and information technology. These are indeed essentially service sector subjects, and it should be borne in mind that the centre is in Brussels, which is above all a service-oriented city. The courseware library — in other words, the set of prepackaged courses — could, however, be expanded to include more technical courses on subjects such as electronics, numerical control and robotics. Picture a hundred students, all of them progressing at their own pace and studying during the hours they themselves choose to work, each with different prospects and goals, and you might well find a hundred trainees working on a hundred different programmes. This demonstrates the value of a computer-managed centre where all courses can be provided on hard disk, floppy disk, videotape and videodisk, using all the transmission techniques appropriate to training programmes that are entirely geared to the individual, in design and in their monitoring of the trainee's performance. The computer centre management software handles applications as a whole, and even includes the facility to book a training place for an applicant if he so wishes.

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With the volume of resources deployed and the substantial budget entailed, this represents a new approach to meeting the training needs of employees and employers in Brussels.

This centre is the first in a chain of self-training centres whose aims are not just to contribute to the general campaign for the improvement of job skills, but will go further, by offering workers alternative ways of learning.

In Brussels, the number of people employed by companies is about 350 000, more than half of them working in small and medium-sized firms. They have been educated to at least upper secondary standard, but they have had no further opportunity to train while developing their careers. When they do come up against the need for continuing training — and this usually happens when the computer is introduced into the small firm they work for — what they tend to look for is the kind of learning relationship they experienced in their childhood at school: a teacher who teaches and gives, a pupil who learns and receives. But today the learning environment has changed: the aims are direct, self-evident and limited. The new knowledge and skills acquired are evaluated immediately by being put to the practical test of everyday use.

The problem that arises, then, is the choice of training facilities, immediately calling the traditional system of continuing training into question, particularly in the length of courses, the technical and teaching skills of the teachers and course content.

The same choices also have to be made by institutions. The provision of training in Brussels is substantial, but how can the continuing training needs of such vast numbers of potential clients be met, using the conventional methods of a teacher standing in front of his class? It is the experience of all industrialized countries that the content of training is — as so often pointed out — notoriously out of line with the job skills required by employers.

The need, then, is for alternative ways of learning; the aim is to define a teaching relationship that suits each individual learner but can also be extended to the largest possible number of learners while retaining its special features.

It is a real problem that the expansion of educational resources to cater for a much wider target group often entails a loss of quality. Classes are overcrowded, young people fail at school or get left behind, teachers lose heart. Paradoxically, illiteracy is on the increase in industrialized countries at a time when the school-leaving age is being raised. We must not make the same mistakes in continuing training by opting for the common denominator of exactly the same teaching relationship, one that takes no account of different needs and different resources, and applying it to everyone.

Manfred VOLLMER

People must learn in different ways, and the adult trainee must be given greater independence and a greater sense of responsibility. To achieve this, he must be placed in a situation in which he is bound to succeed. The father of programmed instruction, B.F. Skinner, used to say that unless 80% of pupils obtained 80% scores in programmed learning, it is the programme that is poor, not the pupils.

This implies that people should be taught in different ways.

A teacher, going over the same lesson for the fifth or sixth time, who turns to his class and says, as he has for the past five or six years, 'Are there any questions?', knows what he is about to hear from the three or four youngsters who put their hands up. They ask the same questions, revealing the same difficulties in understanding the substance of the lesson. For a long time, enlightened educationalists have been developing forms of teaching that allow for learning problems by pre-programming the instructions. When the computer arrived, it helped to give these instructions the necessary flexibility, overcoming the difficulties encountered with programmes on paper, which were slow and cumbersome even when they were applied by teaching machines.

These courses and pre-packaged lessons, this 'teaching software' as we would now say, are the fruit of work done by teams of educationalists, audiovisual technicians, information technologists and experts in all subjects, who have thus extended the educational relationship in time and space.

The relationship is extended in time in that the courses can be used over a relatively lengthy period, depending on the general applicability and topicality of the subject. It is extended in space in that the teaching programme is recorded and stored on magnetic tape, record, floppy disk and videodisk, which means that the educational teams can teach from a distance.

This assumes that specialists in the construction of programmed courses should first have had experience in traditional teaching and are able to define what is called the 'educational scenario' of the course before they even start on its programming or conversion into visual form.

The originator of an expert system is always an expert. Distance teaching, then, does not do away with the teacher but alters his function, adds to his effectiveness, extends his field of action and diminishes the constraints on the instruction he imparts. At the same time, he becomes a partner to colleagues working in the traditional environments of schools and training centres, to whom he contributes a new tone of voice and a new atmosphere, in that broadcasting and computer technologies enable him to pass through walls and overcome the limitations imposed by time and human factors.

The courseware library is made up of the whole set of teaching software. Users of the training facilities at Forespace meet small teams of trainers, who in turn have the constant backing of many teams of experts operating from a distance: the writers of the various audiovisual and computer products that make up the teaching library.

When Forem, in collaboration with Belgian Radio and Television (RBTF), produced and broadcast the TV series on learning Dutch, 'Spreek met ons mee', the 16 000 television viewers who simultaneously took the course (which is, incidentally, included in Forespace's courseware library) benefited from the educational expertise of the whole group of specialist trainers from Forem and RBTF.

What needs to be done therefore, is to **learn to teach in new ways.**

This cannot be improvised. Everybody has memories of somebody with a brilliant mind and honorary degrees from this and that university, but who is a lamentably poor educator and teacher. Everybody can also think of somebody who is quite the opposite.

It is the merit of courseware that it brings together multi-disciplinary teams — and this also implies inter-disciplinary teams in which educationalists, on the one hand, and technicians, on the other, are both part, each of them 'giving an inch or two' for the greater good of the end product. It will certainly be one of Forespace's functions to serve as a meeting point for trainers from a whole diversity of worlds — not only from the education authorities in the Belgian communities and public training agencies, naturally, but also from companies (some have already showed interest) and a growing number of firms specializing in the development of teaching programmes.

This 'training the trainers' function should be combined with another: the training of courseware developers. Forem's recent experience with young teachers/jobseekers has shown that they can acquire a genuinely new qualification by putting their university education and their newly acquired skills to good advantage in producing scenarios for audiovisual methods or writing computer programs.

It is no longer just a matter of audiovisual teaching theory, defining the methods whereby teachers can introduce into their lessons sounds and pictures recorded by highly sophisticated techniques; the objective is to use those same techniques and resources to reproduce the logical paths taken by the learner in the learning process. This objective can never be wholly achieved with everybody, and it is unlikely that there will ever be such a thing as fully 'automated' training, except perhaps with limited goals. It is estimated that a minimum of 20% of training activities based on traditional resources will survive.

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Although there is a need to prepare teachers for this new role, it is just as important to **teach pupils to learn in new ways.**

At the level of school education, it is hard to visualize self-directed learning being used in any more than a partial, transitional fashion, and then only for specific purposes. Computer-aided teaching is, for example, used for children and youngsters who, being quite uninhibited by keyboards and terminals, play with equations just as they would play noughts and crosses. For the rising generations who will soon be making their first contact with the working world and with continuing training, Forespace will probably be nothing out of the ordinary, for they will have encountered similar methods in the workplace and in specialist training centres. The same does not apply to adults, the potential clients of a self-training centre. They would be happy to return to the security of an educational environment with its familiar features of dependency on the teacher, the syllabus, methods and results. To find themselves alone in front of a screen and terminal, headphones clamped over their ears, even knowing that an expert is within call, will create psychological problems for very many trainees, not to mention the natural reluctance of the uninitiated to play with a machine that seems intelligent but whose reactions often seem brusque, especially when it comes to evaluation. It will take a little time, particularly for managers and executives, to get used to training on their own. Secretarial staff, who are used to keyboards and a rapid response from typewriters and word processors, will be readier than others to acquire a positive and welcoming attitude to 'electronic' pictures, messages and responses.

The fact remains — and this is something we have observed with educational television — that some trainees will not achieve sufficient progress in their subject through self-directed training methods to be able to proceed with these methods. Forespace is just one resource, but there are other more traditional resources in Brussels which Forem has made available to the company personnel for almost 20 years. Nevertheless, we believe that cases of computer allergy will grow rarer as time goes by, as has been the case with other audiovisual techniques for learning languages and typing. The reason is not just the one we have already mentioned — the arrival of a younger generation — but also that the hardware and software used in education and training will be the same, or at least will be presented in the same way, as the management and administrative hardware used in working life. One result of the move from theory to practical applications found in everyday working life will be to break down the barrier between the place of training and the workplace and even, going one step further, the place of recreation. This has already happened with television. We should, however, be cautious about going beyond this. In the light of the experience of certain centres which have been opened to the public by large companies, where young people come in to play their electronic games side by side with workers arriving with their software application programs, this co-existence has been of little benefit to the latter. Forespace is a self-training centre for adult workers who have clear-cut vocational objectives.

If they are not yet clear about those objectives, the team of instructors specializing in various subjects is on hand to help each individual draw up his own training plan in the light of his actual needs.

What role will Forespace and its counterparts perform in the future, as distinct from the other training resources provided for workers in small and medium-sized firms?

In the space of one year, 2 000 workers have spent almost 150 000 training hours in Forespace, a demonstration that the prototype in the form of this centre seems to be satisfying a major demand.

Forespace is a prototype, as we have pointed out. Does this mean that there will be similar self-training centres more or less everywhere, reproducing the same model in french-speaking Belgium or Brussels? This might well be the scenario, although the architecture and running of the centre in the exceptional environment of the Tour Madou 23rd floor make it something entirely original.

On the other hand, the principle of self-training and the use of pre-produced courseware will no doubt very quickly be extended elsewhere and to larger target groups. Even today, in certain training centres in large companies, in university departments and even in Forem's own training centres, there are self-training workstations where people can check on what they know, catch up on what they should know, brush up what they already know and in some cases engage in genuine self-training. In education, there are also projects along the same lines. Even so, all this combined adds up to little by comparison with the substantial public- and private-sector budgets devoted to meeting the continuing training needs of personnel employed by large enterprises.

Two years ago, a survey conducted on behalf of Sobemap on companies in Brussels and french-speaking Belgium showed that 80% of small and medium-sized companies not only failed to provide any training for their workforce, but did not even propose to do so or to encourage such training in the years to come. This will mean that workers will have to continue to invest in improving their own job skills, with the help of public or private resources made available to them. Self-training should therefore become an important activity for most workers. Since technical resources offer high quality opportunities for communication and are even evolving towards becoming interactive, without indulging in futurology we might well predict a new role for the Forespace centres that are to be set up: to serve as centres for the dissemination of audiovisual and computer courseware.

Belgium is a country where cable television is more common than anywhere else in the world and where each household has a television set with access to almost 20 different channels. There might well be an intercommunity educational television channel that 'delivers knowledge to the doorstep'. In the French community in Belgium, Forem has been conducting many experiments in this field and applying them in practice for more than 15 years, and proposes to conduct a number of others as well. But there will be more and better training once actual multimedia teaching programme distribution centres have been set up and everybody has access to interactive education and training resources at home or in the workplace. This is certainly not a Utopian dream. Existing achievements in neighbouring countries and in America are already moving along these lines. The true problem that arises will once again be with the software, not the hardware. Forespace and its counterparts will be there to serve as agents for the development of the necessary educational software, meeting the manifold needs of everyone in the field of continuing training.

1990 Statistics

Since the self-training centre opened in August 1989, about 2 000 people have

made use of the services provided by Forespace, 1 316 of them since January 1990. Of these, 20% were jobseekers and the others were employees and managers from companies in Brussels. The courseware library (i.e. the set of teaching packages available to trainees) consists of some 65 titles in the fields of information technology, language learning (English, Dutch and German), business management (including general and analytical accounting) and various subjects such as a course on in-house use of the telephone, leading a working team and banking systems.

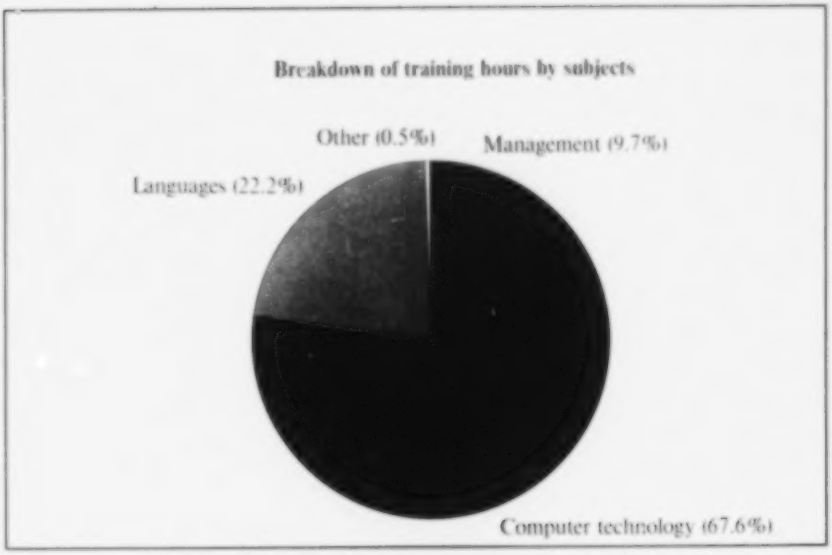
As of September 1990, 58 000 training hours have been used by the 1 316 trainees since the beginning of the year, i.e. an average of 44 training hours per person. This average does not reflect the real picture, however, since some of the trainees take a single 20-30 hour course while others (especially those learning languages) study for more than 100 or 150 hours.

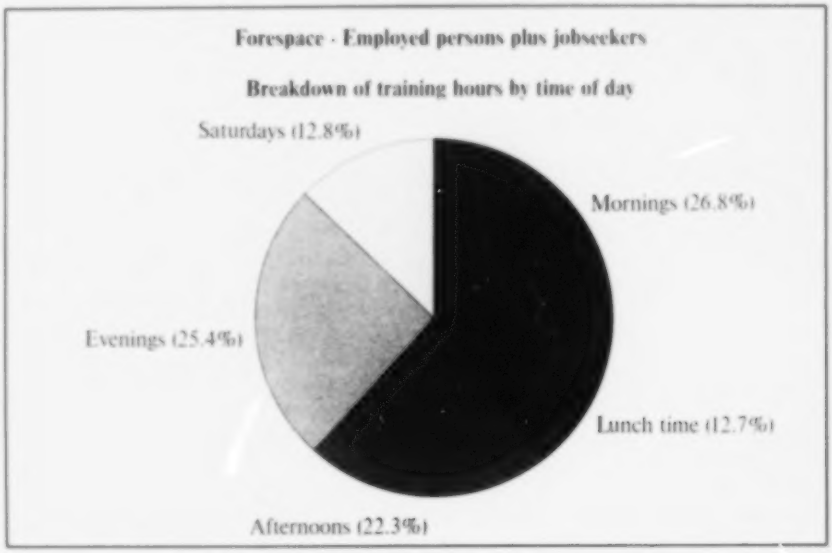
Most of the demand is for computer subjects (69%), followed by languages (21%) and business management (10%).

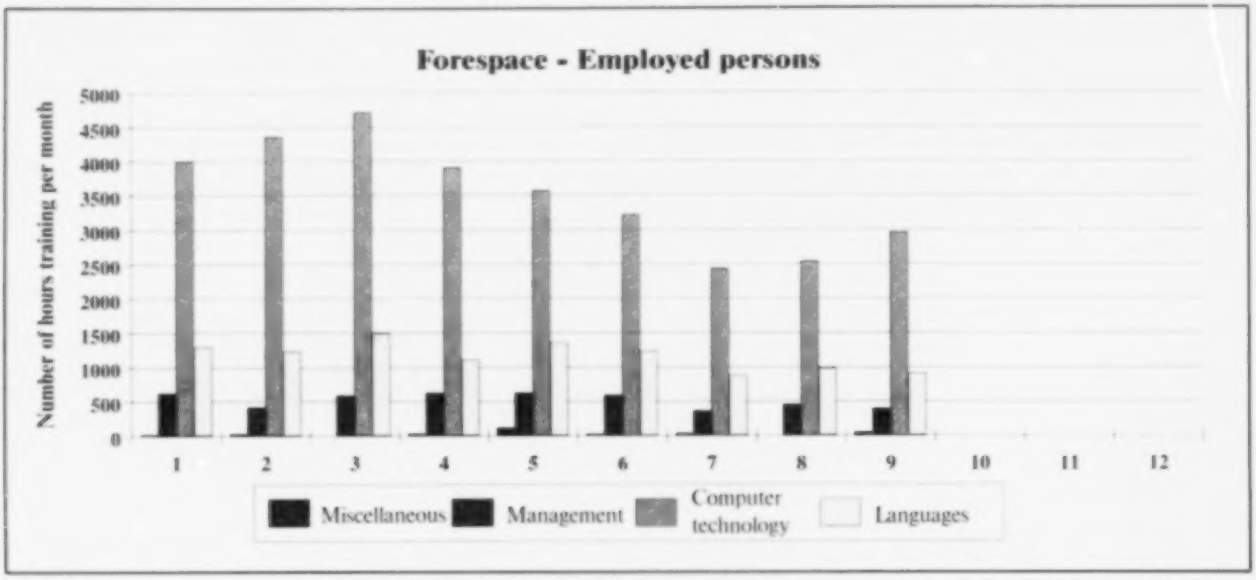
In more recent months, the demand for language learning seems to be increasing by comparison with computer subjects.

The centre is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Mondays to Saturdays, with 15% of places being booked on Saturdays.

The evenings show the highest attendance levels (30% from 6 to 9 p.m.), followed by the mornings (24%, mainly jobseekers), then lunchtime, and finally the afternoons.







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